THE FLAVOR BIBLE

THE ESSENTIAL GUIDE TO CULINARY CREATIVITY, BASED ON THE WISDOM OF AMERICA'S MOST IMAGINATIVE CHEFS

KAREN PAGE AND ANDREW DORNENBURG

IACP Award-Winning Authors of What to Drink with What You Eat
Gastronomy is the rational study of all related to man as he is eating. Its purpose is to keep humankind alive with the best possible food.

— JEAN-ANTHÉLEME BRILLAT-SAVARIN (1755–1826)

In what art or science could improvements be made that would more powerfully contribute to increase the comforts and enjoyments of mankind?

— SIIR BENJAMIN THOMPSON, COUNT RUMFORD
(in a 1794 Essay on the Art of Cookery)
“When we no longer have good cooking in the world, we will have no literature, nor high and sharp intelligence, nor friendly gatherings, nor social harmony.”

— MARIE-ANTOINE CARÈME, CHEF (1784–1833)

“Good cooking is an art, as well as a form of intense pleasure. . . . A recipe is only a theme, which an intelligent cook can play each time with a variation.”

— MADAME JEHANE BENÔIT, CHEF (1904–1987)

“You have to love either what you are going to eat, or the person you are cooking for. Then you have to give yourself up to cooking. Cuisine is an act of love.”

— ALAIN CHAPEL, CHEF (1937–1990)

The first quotation suggests why we do what we do, while the others suggest how. We published our first book in 1995, and it is exciting as we approach the publication of The Flavor Bible in 2008 to witness the realm of good cooking as it reaches a new “tipping point.”

No longer content simply to replicate others’ recipes, today’s cooks — professionals and amateurs alike — increasingly seek to create their own dishes. In doing so, they celebrate the creative process of cooking as much as the finished product.

Cooking at its most basic level is a creative act, one of transforming food through the application of heat and the incorporation of other ingredients. But there are different orders of creativity, and merely following a recipe is a creative act of the most basic order, like painting by numbers.

When accomplished cooks grow restless, they start to analyze instructions before following them to see if they can improve upon the results, thus raising the act of cooking to a creative act of a higher order. As their experience grows, cooks are able to bring greater intuition and even inspiration to their cooking.

Traditional cookbooks are aimed at first-order cooks. Every cook owes a debt of gratitude to those who have brought progress to cuisine throughout history — those who famously codified classic cuisines through the painstaking chronicling of recipes, from Auguste Escoffier in France to others around the globe. Appreciation is also due to those who have elevated and expanded the
range of available ingredients and techniques, the essential building blocks of cooking.

Over the years, cookbooks have come to dictate precise measurement of ingredients along with instructions for their preparation and assembly, which has done much to improve the general accessibility of recipes. However, they also have come to provide a false sense of security for which the unsuspecting cook pays a price. When a recipe is rigidly scripted and blindly followed, it negates the cook's own creative instincts and good judgment — not to mention much of the pleasure of truly “being” in the moment.

“Great cooks rarely bother to consult cookbooks.”
— CHARLES SIMIC, U.S. POET LAUREATE

Those with the urge to innovate had long been on their own in the kitchen until many adopted our 1996 book, Culinary Artistry, as their muse. That book sought to break the mold of contemporary prescriptive cookbooks and to restore the creative instinct to chefs. Drawing on classic flavor combinations and preparations, it put the wisdom of history at cooks' fingertips for the first time — and with the same ease with which writers consulted a thesaurus.

As time passed, it became clear that chefs were thinking of flavors and their combination in new ways, beyond the classics chronicled in Culinary Artistry. Meanwhile, the gap between professionals and amateur cooks narrowed, as the latter installed Viking ranges at home to prepare a burgeoning array of new ingredients, with their TVs transformed into virtual twenty-four-hour cooking schools, given the advent of culinary programming.

“Food without wine is a corpse; wine without food is a ghost. United and well matched, they are as body and soul: living partners.”
— ANDRÉ SIMON, CHEF (1877–1970)

Since the year 2000 we have been studying the new ways in which flavors are being combined. It has been a privilege to interview many of the country’s most imaginative chefs and other food and drink experts (turning to an entirely differ-
ent lineup from those we spoke to for Culinary Artistry). Some are well-established industry pioneers, while others have risen on the scene in recent years. All have wowed us with their savory cuisines and/or desserts, and often in spots less traveled, from Dallas to New Orleans to Hoboken. We've also combed the most recent culinary literature published in 2000 or later.

The first result was our 2006 book, What to Drink with What You Eat, which celebrated the harmonious combination of food and drink and, indeed, their inseparability, as suggested by the André Simon quotation.

The second result is The Flavor Bible, which, like Culinary Artistry, is not intended to be prescriptive; rather, it is an empowerment tool. The Flavor Bible is a comprehensive, easy-to-use single-volume reference of more than six hundred alphabetical entries listing modern-day compatible flavors, chronicling new flavor synergies in the new millennium.

Our books Culinary Artistry (classic flavor combinations before 1996), The Flavor Bible (modern flavor combinations since 2000), and What to Drink with What You Eat (classic and modern food and drink combinations) are essential to use in concert, as each covers different aspects of food and drink flavor harmony.

Flavor Combinations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Classics</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>THE FLAVOR BIBLE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2006</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2008</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Food and Drink Combinations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>WHAT TO DRINK WITH WHAT YOU EAT</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

We believe cooking will continue to evolve, and not only as a means of “doing” (i.e., putting dinner on the table, or “problem-solving” by “following a recipe”). Over time, we believe more people — including, perhaps, yourself — will have discovered it as a way of “being” in the world. We have learned enough over the past decade or two to question why cooking is done one way versus another. This thoughtful sensory engagement leads to a store of experiences that allow us to bring more intuition to the cooking process, synthesizing what we’ve done before into innovative approaches to creating a dish. Ultimately, cooking offers the opportunity to be immersed in one’s senses and in the moment like no other activity, uniting the inner and outer selves. At these times, cooking transcends drudgery and becomes a means of meditation and even healing.
It is little surprise to us, then, that when U.S. Poet Laureate Charles Simic was asked by the *New York Times Magazine*’s Deborah Solomon earlier this year, “What advice would you give to people who are looking to be happy?” his response was “For starters, learn how to cook.”

We hope this book makes you happy — literally.

— Karen Page and Andrew Dornenburg

New York City
April 2008
FLAVOR = TASTE + MOUTHFEEL + AROMA + “THE X FACTOR”: LEARNING TO RECOGNIZE THE LANGUAGE OF FOOD

Magical dishes, magical words: A great cook is, when all is said and done, a great poet. . . . For was it not a visit from the Muses that inspired the person who first had the idea of marrying rice and chicken, grape and thrush, potatoes and entrecôte, Parmesan and pasta, eggplant and tomato, Chambertin and cockerel, liqueur brandy and woodcock, onion and tripe?
— MARCEL E. GRANCHER, CINQUANTE ANS À TABLE (1953)

FLAVOR = TASTE + MOUTHFEEL + AROMA + “THE X FACTOR”

Taste = What is perceived by the taste buds
Mouthfeel = What is perceived by the rest of the mouth
Aroma = What is perceived by the nose
“The X Factor” = What is perceived by the other senses — plus the heart, mind, and spirit

Our taste buds can perceive only four basic tastes: sweet, salty, sour, and bitter. The essence of great cooking is to bring these four tastes into balanced harmony to create deliciousness. It’s that simple — and that difficult. After all, flavor is a function not only of taste, but also of smell, touch, sight, and sound. Because we’re human beings, other nonphysical factors come into play, including our emotions, thoughts, and spirits.

Learning to recognize as well as manipulate both the obvious and subtle components of flavor will make you a much better cook. This book will be your companion in the kitchen whenever you wish to create deliciousness.
Learning to cook like a great chef is within the realm of possibility. However, it is something that is rarely taught; it must be “caught.”

Everyone who cooks — or even merely seasons their food at the table before eating — can benefit from mastering the basic principles of making food taste great. This complex subject is simplified by one thing: while the universe may contain a vast number of ingredients and a virtually infinite number of ingredient combinations, the palate can register only the four basic tastes.

Great food balances these tastes beautifully. A great cook knows how to taste, to discern what is needed, and to make adjustments. Once you learn how to season and how to balance tastes, a whole new world opens up to you in cooking. Of course, several factors conspire against your ever doing so — not the least of which is a culture that sees the publication of thousands of new cookbooks annually featuring recipes that promise to dazzle you and your guests if you follow them to the letter. And yet you’re often left wondering why the results aren’t as delicious as promised. That’s because great cooking is never as simple as merely following a recipe. The best cooking requires a discerning palate to know when a dish needs a little something or other — and what to add or do to elevate its flavor.

**WHAT IS PERCEIVED BY THE MOUTH**

**Taste Buds**
Sweetness. Saltiness. Sourness. Bitterness. Every delicious bite you’ve ever tasted has been a result of these four tastes coming together on your taste buds. We taste them as individual notes, and in concert. Each taste affects the other. For example, bitterness suppresses sweetness. In addition, different tastes affect us in different ways. Saltiness stimulates the appetite, while sweetness satiates it. Take the time to explore the four basic tastes.

**Sweetness**
It takes the greatest quantity of a substance that is sweet (versus salty, sour, or bitter) to register on our taste buds. However, we can appreciate the balance and “roundness” that even otherwise imperceptible sweetness adds to savory dishes. Sweetness can work with bitterness, sourness — even saltiness. Sweetness can also bring out the flavors of other ingredients, from fruits to mint.

**Saltiness**
When we banished more than thirty of America’s leading chefs to their own desert islands with only ten ingredients to cook with for the rest of their lives (*Culinary Artistry*, 1996), the number-one ingredient they chose was salt. Salt is nature’s flavor enhancer. It is the single most important taste for making savory food delicious. (Sweetness, by the way, plays the same role in desserts.)
Sourness
Sourness is second only to salt in savory food and sugar in sweet food in its impor-
tance as a flavor enhancer. Sour notes — whether a squeeze of lemon or a drizzle
of vinegar — add sparkle and brightness to a dish. Balancing a dish’s acidity with
its other tastes is critical to the dish’s ultimate success.

Bitterness
Humans are most sensitive to bitterness, and our survival wiring allows us to rec-
ognize it in even relatively tiny amounts. Bitterness balances sweetness, and can
also play a vital role in cutting richness in a dish. While bitterness is more impor-
tant to certain people than to others, some chefs see it as an indispensable “cleans-
ing” taste — one that makes you want to take the next bite, and the next.

Umami (Savoriness)
In addition to the four basic tastes, there is growing evidence of a fifth taste,
*umami*, which we first wrote about in 1996 in *Culinary Artistry*. It is often de-
scribed as the savory or meaty “mouth-filling” taste that is noticeable in such in-
gredients as anchovies, blue cheese, mushrooms, and green tea, and in such flavorings as monosodium glutamate (MSG), which is the primary component of
branded seasonings such as Ac’cent.

Mouthfeel
In addition to its sense of taste, the mouth has a sense of “touch” and can register
other sensations, such as temperature and texture, that all play a role in flavor.
These aspects of food, generally characterized as mouthfeel, help to bring food
into alignment with our bodies, and bring some of a dish’s greatest interest and
pleasure. The crunchiness and crispiness of a dish contribute sound as well as tex-
tural appeal.

Temperature
_I always pay attention to temperature. I look at what I feel like eating now. If it is cold
and rainy outside, I make sure that soup is on the menu. If it is hot outside, I make sure
there are lots of salads on the menu._

— ANDREW CARMELLINI, A VOCE (NEW YORK CITY)

Temperature is one of the foremost among the other sensations that can be per-
ceived by the mouth. The temperature of our food even affects our perception of
its taste; for example, coldness suppresses sweetness. Boston pastry chef Rick
Katz, with whom Andrew cooked at Lydia Shire’s restaurant Biba, first taught him
the lesson of pulling out the ice cream a few minutes before serving so that the
slight rise in temperature could maximize its flavor.

A food’s temperature can affect both the perception and enjoyment of a dish.
A chilled carrot soup on a hot summer day — and hot roasted carrots on a cold
winter day — could be said to be “healing” through their ability to bring our bod-
ies into greater alignment with our environment.
Texture

I would never serve pike on a base of chowder, because balance and texture are so important when it comes to creating a dish. Is there a rich component, a lean component, a crunchy component, and a cleansing component? Are all the taste sensors activated so that you want to go back for a second bite? Cod works better over a richer preparation like chowder. I would also make sure to choose the right technique for the cod: I would not poach it, because if it is poached it would be silky on silky. If it is seared, it is crunchy on silky — which is more appealing because of the contrast.

— SHARON HAGE, YORK STREET (DALLAS)

A food’s texture is central to its ability to captivate and to please. We value pureed and/or creamy foods (such as soups and mashed potatoes) as “comfort” foods, and crunchiness and crispiness (such as nachos and caramel corn) as “fun” foods. We enjoy texture as it activates our other senses, including touch, sight, and sound.

While babies by necessity eat pureed foods, most adults enjoy a variety of textures, particularly crispiness and crunchiness, which break up the smoothness of texture — or even the simple monotony — of dishes.
Piquancy
Our mouths can also sense what we often incorrectly refer to as “hotness,” meaning piquancy’s “sharpness” and/or “spiciness” — whether boldly as in chile peppers, or more subtly as in a sprinkle of cayenne pepper. Some people find the experience of these picante (as the Spanish refer to it, or piccante as the Italians do) tastes more pleasurable than others.

Astringency
Our mouths “pucker” to register astringency. This is a drying sensation caused by the tannins in red wine or strong tea, and occasionally in foods such as walnuts, cranberries, and unripe persimmons.

WHAT IS PERCEIVED BY THE NOSE

Aroma
Aroma is thought to be responsible for as much as 80 percent or more of flavor. This helps to explain the popularity of aromatic ingredients, from fresh herbs and spices to grated lemon zest. Incorporating aromatic ingredients can enhance the aroma of your dish and, in turn, its flavor.

Some qualities are perceived through both the sense of taste and smell, such as:

Pungency
Pungency refers to the taste and aroma of such ingredients as horseradish and mustard that are as irritating — albeit often pleasantly — to the nose as they are to the palate.

Chemesthesis
Chemesthesis refers to other sensations that tickle (e.g., the tingle of carbonated beverages) or play tricks on (e.g., the false perception of “heat” from chile peppers, or “cold” from peppermint) our gustatory senses.

WHAT IS PERCEIVED BY THE HEART, MIND, AND SPIRIT

“The X Factor”
When we are present to what we are eating, food has the power to affect our entire selves. We experience food not only through our five physical senses — including our sense of sight, which we ad-
Compatible Flavors

An essential aspect of great cooking is harnessing compatible flavors — which involves knowing which herbs, spices, and other flavorings best accentuate particular ingredients.

A process of trial and error over centuries suited in classic cuisines and dishes, some of which feature timeless combinations of beloved flavor pairings — for example, basil with tomatoes,行使 with lamb, and tarragon with lobster.

However, today it's possible to use scientific techniques to analyze similar molecular structures to come up with new, compatible pairing possibilities, as odd as some might sound — such as jasmine with pork liver, parsley with banana, or white chocolate with caviar.

dress first below — but also emotionally, mentally, and even spiritually.

The Visual

The visual presentation of a dish can greatly enhance the pleasure we derive from it. Just a few decades ago, it was still possible to taste a dish with the eyes, but only those who'd spent time in world-class kitchens knew the tricks of such artistic plate presentation. Since the advent of Art Culinaire and the Web, it's become easier to reproduce a great dish's elaborate form than its exquisite flavor.

How a dish looks can also affect our perception of its flavor in more direct ways; for example, the deeper the color of a berry sorbet, the more berry flavor is perceived. The stronger the connection between a particular food and a particular color, the stronger the flavor impact — such as berries with red, lemon with yellow, and lime with green.

The Emotional

I say all the time that [my mother's Spanish potato and egg tortilla] is my favorite because it conveys a point: that sentimental value comes above all else.

— FERRAN ADRIA, EL BULLI (SPAIN)
Compatible Flavors

An essential aspect of great cooking is harnessing compatible flavors — which involves knowing which herbs, spices, and other flavorings best accentuate particular ingredients.

A process of trial and error over centuries resulted in classic cuisines and dishes, some of which feature timeless combinations of beloved flavor pairings — for example, basil with tomatoes, rosemary with lamb, and tarragon with lobster.

However, today it's possible to use scientific techniques to analyze similar molecular structures to come up with new, compatible pairing possibilities, as odd as some might sound — such as jasmine with pork liver, parsley with banana, or white chocolate with caviar.

dress first below — but also emotionally, mentally, and even spiritually.

The Visual

The visual presentation of a dish can greatly enhance the pleasure we derive from it. Just a few decades ago, it was still possible to taste a dish with the eyes, but only those who'd spent time in world-class kitchens knew the tricks of such artistic plate presentation. Since the advent of *Art Culinaire* and the Web, it's become easier to reproduce a great dish's elaborate form than its exquisite flavor.

How a dish looks can also affect our perception of its flavor in more direct ways; for example, the deeper the color of a berry sorbet, the more berry flavor is perceived. The stronger the connection between a particular food and a particular color, the stronger the flavor impact — such as berries with red, lemon with yellow, and lime with green.

The Emotional

*I say all the time that [my mother's Spanish potato and egg tortilla] is my favorite because it conveys a point: that sentimental value comes above all else.*

— FERRAN ADRIA, EL BULLI (SPAIN)
We taste with our hearts as much as with our tongues. What else could explain adult preferences for one's mother's dishes over those prepared by a great chef? This also helps to explain the lasting appeal of traditional dishes and cuisines of countries around the globe, which stem from our love for their cultures, their people, and the deeply rooted culinary traditions that have sustained them over centuries.

### The Mental

If we ate only for sustenance, we could probably survive on nutritive pills and water. But we also eat for pleasure. Because we typically eat three times a day, 365 days a year, we enjoy novelty, such as a twist on the traditional construct of a dish. Increasingly, since the 1980s and the advent of “tall” food, chefs have played with the presentation of their ingredients. Since the 1990s, the advent of avant-garde cuisine and so-called molecular gastronomy has seen chefs experiment more and more with both the chemical composition and presentation of dishes as well.

### The Spiritual

The preparation, cooking, and eating of food is a sacrament. Treating it as such has the potential to elevate the quality of our daily lives like nothing else. Several of the world’s leading chefs have worked to perfect each aspect of the dining encounter — from the food and drink to the ambiance to the service — to raise the overall experience to a new level imbued not only with pleasure, comfort, and interest, but also with meaning.

---

**Choosing a Cooking Technique with Michael Anthony of Gramercy Tavern in New York City**

When we look at an ingredient, we ask, “How can we maximize the inherent flavor or quality of what this is?” As in any other progressive modern kitchen, there is a fascination with examining all the new techniques we can get our hands on. We have used sous vide [i.e., cooking vacuum-packed ingredients at low temperatures for long periods of time], but we are far from letting any technique drive a dish.

Alice Waters described something cooked via sous vide as “dead” food. I can understand her opinion because she is all about inflecting that “fresh-cut crunch” feeling into her food. Sous vide is all about a long, slow cooking process — and those products calling for that [such as tougher cuts of meat] will be awesome.

Why we choose any specialized piece of equipment for a dish always gets back to good old-fashioned cooking principles: What is the best way of capturing flavors?

That is how choosing a technique fits into my cooking. I’m excited to eat in restaurants that are pushing the boundaries of presentation and technique. Yet my personal take on food that is too technically driven is that technique comes first and taste comes second. I feel the meals that hit home are ones where the flavor is there and you are eating a meal in a distinct time and place. I love it when people look back on a meal, and the time of year is what made it special. The ingredients they tasted seemed naturally a part of that moment because that is what is available then.

Sometimes straightforward flavors are the ones people can latch on to, even though the ingredients can be very sophisticated behind the scenes. If, ultimately, the flavor combination is one that is simple and straightforward, with an impressive balance of acidity and bitterness, and you remember it, then you win as a diner. Sometimes the meals that hit home are not the ones that were the most complicated.

\[ \text{Flavor} = \text{Taste} + \text{Mouthfeel} + \text{Aroma} + \text{"The X Factor"} \]
America's foremost chefs reached the pinnacle of their profession through their painstaking attention to every aspect of their cuisine and the restaurant experience. Chefs bring their own unique approaches to their cuisines, which are arguably rooted in either the physical, emotional, mental, or spiritual — although they can span two, three, or even all of them.

Chefs whose focus celebrates the physical realm include Alice Waters of Chez Panisse in Berkeley, California, with her pathbreaking focus on the quality of ingredients sourced and served, and Dan Barber of Blue Hill at Stone Barns in Pocantico Hills, New York, whose on-premises greenhouse, gardens, and pastures grow and raise much of what the restaurant serves.

Celebrating the emotional realm are those chefs whose cuisines are closely tied to a specific culture, its people, and their traditions. It includes chefs such as Rick Bayless, whose Frontera Grill and Topolobampo in Chicago elevate Mexican cuisine, and Vikram Vij and Meeru Dhalwala, whose Vij’s and Rangoli restaurants in Vancouver honor and celebrate the cooking of India and tap Indian women exclusively to staff their kitchens.

Easily identifiable as part of the mental realm are chefs whose efforts are reconceptualizing how food can be manipulated and presented, such as Chicago's Grant Achatz of Alinea (with signature dishes such as bacon on a clothesline) and Homaro Cantu of Moto (whose dishes include incorporating edible paper printed with soy-based inks, and a doughnut soup that looks like eggnog and tastes just like a doughnut).

Through the elevation not only of their cuisines but of the creation and orchestration of ambiance and service as well, chefs such as Daniel Boulud of New York's Restaurant Daniel and Patrick O'Connell of The Inn at Little Washington in Virginia transcend the prior three categories to bring the dining experience to another level in the spiritual realm.

In the pages that follow, we'll share chefs' reflections on working in the first three realms. (As for their thoughts on the fourth, we invite you to visit or revisit our book Culinary Artistry.)

The Physical Realm

*My motto has always been: Find the best ingredients possible, and listen to what they tell you about how they want to be prepared. Mess with them as little as you can. Keep their integrity, but at the same time, focus their flavor, which is where creativity comes in.*

— VITALY PALEY, PALEY'S PLACE (PORTLAND, OREGON)

The best chefs work with the best ingredients available to them. The very best chefs don't settle for this, and seek out even better ingredients through working with foragers, developing relationships with farmers and other purveyors, and even growing their own produce and raising their own animals.
**Monica Pope of T'afia in Houston**

My cooking changed radically when we started hosting a farmers' market [located at T'afia]. I remember when I was cooking in California, and chefs would be waiting for an ingredient to come into season. When it arrived, their philosophy would be “Let's just slice it and not screw it up.” I thought, “That is just not the way restaurants work.” It's hard to believe that now I am saying the same thing that they used to say.

Since the advent of the farmers' market, when I get a product, it is phenomenal — because it was picked at the right time and has never even been refrigerated before it comes to my door. Sometimes I feel guilty because people will love something, and ask what I did to it. Often the answer is “Very little.”

Our zucchini salad is a perfect example of celebrating what comes to our door. We get baby zucchini and we shave them raw. Then we add a flavored pecan oil, raw local pecan halves, shaved pecorino cheese, Mexican marigold, and a pinch of salt.

We also think a lot about the best way to present these ingredients. The salad has to be interesting the whole way through, and I want the customer to have the experience of interacting with it themselves. I want them to have the experience of lifting a shaved piece of cheese after their bite of crunchy yellow or light-green squash. They will see that the salad is dressed with oil, but then have to search and realize that it is pecan oil. Then they will take the next bite and get the herb that has a minty note to it. To achieve this, I will taste a dish night after night to make sure it is “eating” the way I want it to eat.

**Michael Anthony of Gramercy Tavern in New York City**

You want to have an infatuation with the ingredients you cook with. You want to tap all the hopes and dreams that went into producing that ingredient. You need to think, “Is this ingredient not only up to par, but is it brilliant?” When it is cooked, you want whoever bites into what you made to think that the flavor is bright, interesting, and delicious.

I take a simple approach to my food, but simple food does not mean unmanipulated food. Sometimes simple food is simply boring.

When I cook, I am looking to pull myself back from a dish rather than add to a dish. I would rather a dish feel too simple than too fussy. So, sticking to my core principles, I never want to overload a dish with too many ingredients. But cooking is not always one-two-three. Sometimes you need some extra ingredients as long as they work dynamically.

**Dan Barber of Blue Hill at Stone Barns in Pocantico Hills, New York**

Our pork dish starts not at the table with the cut of pork on the plate, but in the field with what kind of pork we choose to raise for our restaurant. I make a lot of decisions to get the most “pigness” out of our pork dish. We raise Berkshire pigs, which have a great flavor. They are an older breed that has a flavor profile that

---

*Flavor = Taste + Mouthfeel + Aroma + “The X Factor”*
newer breeds don't have. The pig has a great intramuscular profile that allows it to develop a better flavor.

We feed our pigs organic grains and that makes a huge difference. We feed them a wide variety of grains and they forage as well. We are also careful of how much corn the pigs eat. I proved unequivocally this summer the difference feed makes. We had a problem getting organic grain for about eight weeks and had to use conventional grain that has more corn in it because it is cheap to use in the feed. I tasted our pork that was raised exactly the same way side by side with the only change being the feed, and the flavor was as different as night and day. The flavor of the two was so different that a child could tell them apart.

We also make sure our pigs are slaughtered in a less stressful way. This makes for a calmer pig, and you can see a difference in the meat and taste the difference [in the texture] on the plate.

At Blue Hill when you order the pork at our restaurant, you don't know what cut you will be getting. We serve leg, shoulder, rack, loin, and belly; it is a mix on the plate. This makes for a more interesting experience, because you get a variety of flavors and textures. We keep the dish pretty straightforward. We will serve it with Brussels sprout leaves and chickpeas.

We don't want to do anything to hide the flavor. We make a pork stock, infuse it with more roasted scraps and bones to make a pork second [also known as a remoulage], then do one more pass with more pork and very little wine. This is water that has been infused with pork three times.

Depending on the season, I will make an infusion with herbs like a tea and add a little to the sauce if I want to add more flavor. The reason I do an infusion is to make sure the flavor is so light that you don't even know it is there.

The Emotional Realm
I have no professional cooking training. My starting point was, What do I know? I know Indian spices and flavors.
— MEERU DHALWALA, VIJ'S (VANCOUVER)

There are many emotional connections to draw from when creating dishes — from the bounty of a particular country and its historic evolution into a national cuisine, to the classic dishes of that culture, and of the families and even individual cooks within it — as each might bring a unique twist to the standards.

Maricel Presilla of Cucharamama and Zafra in Hoboken, New Jersey
I'm Cuban — but whether you are Cuban, Venezuelan, Chilean [or another nationality], there is an enormous pride in the flavors of your region and of your childhood. It is like mother's milk, your first compass. It doesn't matter how much you travel or how much you expand your palate: You always come back to this notion of basic flavors and ingredients, time and again.

For me, being a Cuban from eastern Cuba is my anchor. I am from Santiago, which has a very defined cuisine. It is more influenced by the neighboring islands
such as Jamaica and Haiti, which both have European influences as well. The cooks from those islands brought flavors with them like allspice, which is not used in the rest of Cuba. My family uses allspice lavishly in our adobo and in other dishes. I use it a lot as well — and it is one of my favorite spices. Our cooking has more complexity than the food of Havana because of these influences.

We have the most interesting cuisine in the world — and I am not kidding. I have traveled throughout South America, cooking with chefs as well as elderly women, not to mention studying the history of our cuisine from pre-Columbian cooking through the influence of Spanish medieval cooking.

What is fascinating is that there is a lot of structure to our cooking and clearly defined rules to our seasoning.

I have learned how all these flavors work in their nationalities and regions, making Latin America my “backyard” of flavor. I am like a painter, and every painter has his or her own palette. I use this analogy because my father was a painter, and there are colors that he would never use that would not be on his palette.

When I want to be creative, I am comfortable reaching across topographical boundaries. However, I do so with an understanding of all the basic elements of flavor in South American cuisine because I have studied them, eaten them, and lived them!

Vikram Vij of Vij’s and Rangoli in Vancouver

The three secrets to my cooking? Number one, my wife, Meeru. Number two, treating the spices with integrity. And number three, using local produce as much as possible.

My own mother is from the northern part of India, so my style and flavors are a combination of different whole and ground spices. I love fenugreek and cinnamon and other aromatics. But one of my [signature dishes] is actually called Mother-in-Law’s Pork Curry, because it is based on a recipe my mother-in-law gave me for stewed meat.

I wanted to make something new and was talking to Meeru, who told me her mother used to make a curry with lamb, cream, masala, and some other spices and that they loved it. I decided to try it with pork instead of lamb. It was vindaloo style with vinegar, and green onions added right at the end so that they stayed really fresh. There were too many spices in it to list on the menu so it just made sense to name the dish after her instead.

When I opened my first restaurant, I didn't have a liquor license and did not want to serve [soda] pop or anything with artificial ingredients or preservatives. I remembered growing up in India and having lemon water with a hint of salt and pepper as a homemade lemonade. [At Vij’s,] we made some lemonade and added a little ginger, a pinch of salt, and sparkling water to give the refreshing effervescence of [soda] pop. We started out serving it with pepper as well, but customers couldn't get used to seeing black pepper in a drink.

It is wonderful at the beginning of the meal to refresh your palate.
Meeru Dhalwala Vij of Vij's and Rangoli in Vancouver

While working in India for eleven months, I visited Gujarat for the first time. In the United States, to me “Indian food” was what my mom cooked. I had no idea there were other kinds!

If you watch a Bollywood movie, you see that the Punjabis and the Gujaratis make a lot of fun of each other. The Gujaratis find us Punjabis very volatile and show-offy. They will say, “Just like your cuisine, you are all fiery and hot!” We Punjabis, on the other hand, think the Gujaratis are quiet and dull. Of course, for me, that has all changed — I love all Indians.

In Gujarat, at the end of cooking a curry, they would add a teaspoon of sugar and a half a lime. The first time I tasted this, it was awful — but then I found out that the cook of the house was a crappy cook! When I had it done correctly, it was delicious, and had a nice, mellow aftertaste. So, I incorporated lime into my cooking after eating Gujarati food in India.

My kitchen is staffed by Punjabi women, who had a hard time using lime because it was not part of their cooking in Punjab. When they tasted it, they thought, “Yuck! What’s the point?” Since my Punjabi cooks don’t like lime, this led me to start using kaffir lime. I had more control over the recipes’ flavor because I could just say, “Add 15 leaves to the recipe.” And I learned that turmeric and lime leaf are wonderful together, by the way.

The Mental Realm

In modern architecture and design, form is said to follow function. In the cutting-edge world of avant-garde cuisine, which turns classic dishes inside out for the sake of argument or even simple amusement, form follows flavor.

Homaro Cantu of Moto in Chicago

Moto is not meant to be an everyday experience. Neither is Charlie Trotter’s [also in Chicago] or Daniel [in New York City]. Someone could say that these chefs are just cooking for themselves, and that is true to a certain extent. I am doing this style of avant-garde cooking because I am bored with other dishes. If I was all about the customer and just wanted to make people happy, I would cook paella, pizza, and burgers all day. Everyone would have smiles on their faces!

There is a little bit of selfishness, but there is also playfulness. We have to make sure guests are happy, and that our dishes are both inventive and seasonal. What is happening [in the world] right now is that we are expanding our repertoire of what good food is.

Flavor = Taste + Mouthfeel + Aroma + “The X Factor”
At Moto, when we start out with a concept, flavor is the most important thing but also the last thing we think about. Something might taste great, but who cares? What are we going to do with it? As it pertains to us, we look at a concept. Then it evolves into something where we tweak the flavor a little bit to make it taste more like it “should.” For example, once we wanted to make a cookie with a really concentrated flavor. So, we threw cookies into the dehydrator, and turned them into powder. This created a new building block for flavor. [Instead of the flour you would normally use in your dough,] you weigh the powdered cookies out as your starch in your normal cookie recipe. But this starch is now a carrier of flavor for the end product — so the resulting cookie now tastes more like it “should” than it would have just using regular flour.

A lot of our food is rooted in classic combinations — and it has to be. Why? The process by which we go about creating is so foreign that we have to make something that you are familiar with eating. In a tapas restaurant, you have had generations of trial and error to create a dish through local ingredients and techniques that have evolved into something that tastes good. For example, olives marinated with garlic and parsley has been around for a hundred years. Now, there is nothing wrong with that. But, for us, the idea of marinating olives with garlic and parsley is not fun. So, we are going to make a dish where the olives are actually the parsley and the garlic is the olives and so on. But it tastes like something you'd want.
What’s in a Pancake? Yes, we do serve real food. We got some BLiS syrup [handcrafted aged maple syrup] in the kitchen which is used by other top chefs around the country. This stuff is liquid gold! This syrup is aged in small bourbon barrels in Canada and is $20 for a small [375 ml] bottle. The maker even hand-stamps each bottle with wax and writes the label by hand. When we got it in, we knew we had to do something with it.

We decided to make a pancake dish. We started with the question “How can we make this dish taste more like pancakes than pancakes?” So, we pureed cooked pancakes, then adjusted the liquid with milk. The cool thing about making a pancake puree out of cooked pancakes is that you can alter the concentration levels. You can’t alter the concentration levels when you are making straight pancakes.

We wanted to trick the customer into thinking that they were going to eat a hot pancake topped with this syrup. Believability is so important in the process, so we even execute the dish in front of them [in the dining room]. We bring out a metal plate that looks hot [but is frozen and steaming from being immersed in nitrogen]. The pancake batter is then shot from a syringe. The batter freezes when it hits the metal. When we serve it, we top it with the BLiS syrup. Ninety-nine percent of the people who were served this dish swore they were getting a hot flapjack, and it was only when they tasted it that they learned it was cold.

Contrarian by Nature People want to say that wine is natural and has been around a thousand years. But is it natural or unnatural? We don’t know. You have people in a foreign country stepping all over these grapes, putting foot fungus in there, and then creating a fermented thing that is controlled. I don’t think that wine is all that natural! Every time you turn on the blender and puree something, you are crossing the line of natural versus unnatural. Nature did not intend for an electric motor to spin a blade and turn a solid into a liquid.

If you think an unripe green tomato tastes better than a ripe heirloom red tomato picked off the vine in August, then by all means eat the green tomato. That is flavor preference. What if I feed you an unripe green tomato but alter its taste so it tastes better than a vine-ripened red tomato? When we pick it off the vine earlier, it has a different quality — it is sharper. So, we will pair something that maybe should not go with it, like Parmesan cheese pureed with butter. This will make it a little richer and compensate for the overtannic, overacidic qualities of the tomato. [If you enjoy it,] then you have succumbed to not following the seasons.

In the same manner, we’ll serve a dish of unripe things that taste ripe because they are together! What do I prefer? Of course I prefer the vine-ripened tomato at the end of August. We would make the other dish just to ask the question.

Creating New Flavors I disagree with the notion that there are no new flavors. Maybe there are no new products, even though we don’t know everything that exists in the sea. To create a new flavor, all you have to do is dissect an ingredient. For example, if I take an avocado and put it into a centrifuge, we would separate the fat and the water. The water will carry the avocado taste. If I take that water and create a snow with it or make it into a pill, it will have a much different taste than avocado,
How to Lengthen Flavors

Think of something in its pure form like passion fruit puree: it is strong, vibrant, and when it touches your tongue, you taste it [all at once]. I learned from Heston Blumenthal [chef of The Fat Duck, the Michelin three-star restaurant in England] that if you take that same passion fruit and make it into a gelee and cube it, then you will get the flavor little by little as the cube melts on your palate. The flavor release takes longer and lasts longer in your mouth.

— JOHNNY IUZZINI, PASTRY CHEF, JEAN GEORGES (NEW YORK CITY)

Sometimes we try to lengthen flavors, like you have with some wines [e.g., wines that are said to have “a long finish” that you taste long after swallowing]. I will think, “How long do I want a flavor to last? Do I want a blast, or do I want it to linger?”

We make a dish of a fried oyster with shiso and a wasabi, yuzu, and sancho pepper [also known as Szechuan pepper] sauce. That is a great way to experience length of flavor. The shiso wraps around the oyster like a taco shell. When you take a bite, you get the herbaceous punch from the shiso, then richness from the fried oyster that coats your tongue. Then you get the acid from the yuzu on the sides of your tongue. When you swallow the bite, the wasabi comes up the back of your nose. Then you get a small surprise because the pepper gives you a numbing effect across your palate. This is not a “two seconds of heaven” bite; we are talking about a twenty-second experience. We have orchestrated this not in a crazy chemical way, but just by playing with an oyster.

The cues come from the wine world: Sometimes you want bright and spritzy high-acid flavor, and other times you want something rich and long.

— BRAD FARMERIE, PUBLIC (NEW YORK CITY)

because avocado is thought of as something that is rich. But there would be no richness here; it is a completely different product. We just made up a new flavor.

So now if I want to mimic an avocado, I would have to serve something rich with it. I could serve something dairy with it, like brown butter. I now have something that would go with a classical turbot dish with brown butter and capers, whereas fresh avocado would not have paired up with that dish very well.

Katsuya Fukushima of minibar in Washington, DC
I like to work with classic, preexisting flavor combinations that people can recognize. They may not recognize anything from the textures I use, but they will find recognition in the flavors.

To make our “Philly Cheesesteak,” we start with the bread. We put pita dough through a pasta machine so that it gets really thin, but puffs way up when you cook it. For the cheese element, we use a Vermont and Wisconsin cheddar cheese mousse that we pipe on the pita. For the beef, we serve seared Kobe beef. For the onions, we spread on caramelized onion puree. We then top that with truffles. So you have bread, cheese, beef, and onion, just like a Philly cheesesteak. We add the truffles just to push it over the top.

CHEFS’ STRATEGIES FOR BALANCING FLAVORS

On every forkful — regardless of what’s on the fork — there has to be salt, acid, and heat. . . . However, unless you are serving a pepper-crusted dish, or a lemon or vinegar dish, your seasoning should never be detected. Instead, your beans should taste like beans, and your rabbit should taste like rabbit. Diners don’t need to know how much salt, acid, and heat are in the dish — and none should be obvious. You’ll also have minor supporting players in a dish, such as the aromatic or piciante levels that might come from your mirepoix or sofrito [a well-cooked sauce of tomatoes, garlic, onions, and herbs] or whatever else went in there. But when a diner tastes your dishes, all you want them to be thinking about is those beans, or that rabbit.

— SHARON HAGE, YORK STREET (DALLAS)

Over the past fifteen years, we have interviewed many chefs in an effort to understand how some of America’s best chefs approach creating great food. What we learned is that there are as many approaches as chefs themselves. While some strategies overlap, others are unique and display strong self-knowledge as to what makes their individual cuisines so original and compelling.


Traci Des Jardins of Jardinière in San Francisco
The most important aspect of any dish is balance — between acid, fat, salt, and sweetness. It is the key to making food taste good.

The same is true in pastry. I am constantly working with my pastry chef when I taste desserts with her. I will taste something and say it is too sweet — that it is missing the acid balance, and needs some fat and a little salt. Using salt in pastry brings out the flavor, just as it does in savory food. When it comes to dessert, people think more in a “monochromatic” sweet fashion. But sweets need balance, too.

My favorite flavor is the harmony of these elements working together, whether it is sweet or savory.

Marcel Desaulniers of The Trellis in Williamsburg, Virginia
My cooking philosophy has always been simple: Don’t complicate things, and let the food speak for itself. I want the food to leave a clean taste in your mouth, and that goes for savory food as well as desserts.

We don’t use a lot of spices because they can have an intensity of flavor that can overwhelm other flavors. People can’t restrain themselves with certain ingredients — and, often, it’s garlic. At The Trellis, we use garlic in only one recipe: a dressing that has been on the menu for twenty-six years. Herbs can be overused as well, too. Rosemary and basil, which I love, are constantly overused, which results in a bitter flavor.

I tell cooks, “When in doubt, don’t use it.” The food you are starting with already has its own intrinsic flavor, whether it is a scallop or a filet of beef. Whatever you do to embellish the flavor should be a very minor part of the relationship, rather than sharing the stage fifty-fifty.

I thought of myself as a saucier from my days in New York, yet when I opened this restaurant in Williamsburg, it was not the way I wanted to present the food. Rather than sauces, I wanted to use vegetables and fruits as the accompaniments. They provide moisture as a natural component and they work on the plate, but not as a fifty-fifty partner.

An example of where fruit works great as a component is on our pork dish: We serve pork loin medallions, grilled sausage, sweet potatoes, tender cooked string beans, and bourbon-glazed peaches. So this is a dish with no sauce, except the juice from the peaches.

Carrie Nahabedian of Naha in Chicago
You should always season something right from the start, and not just at the end. If you just add salt and pepper at the end, you are not doing a soup justice. You want those flavors to blossom.

Take our butternut squash soup as an example. We start our soup with hefty pieces of slab bacon, so we are already starting off with a lot of flavor. From there, we add the mirepoix and make sure it gets nice and caramelized. Then we start adding our salt, fresh-cracked pepper, and thyme sprig.

Next, we add roasted squash. The reason we roast it before it goes in the soup is because you can taste what state the squash is in. It may need a little help be-
caused it needed to age a couple more weeks in the cell before we got it, so we may add a garnet yam. Now, we taste the soup and decide what kind of sweetness to add. That could be honey, molasses, or maple sugar — not just [white] sugar.

Next, we puree the soup and pass it [through a fine-mesh strainer] to achieve its smooth texture.

To the soup base, we add the garnishes. We already have bacon, but some smoked duck will be good, too. We add spaghetti squash and fried parsnips for additional texture and, in the case of the parsnips, sweetness as well. For a last note, we add a drizzle of maple syrup or barrel-aged sherry. These things just seal the soup so that the flavors all escalate. It is important to not rush things so that your flavors come together.

Andrew Carmellini of A Voce in New York City

Any kind of sauce boils down to acid, salt, sweetness, and two kinds of spice: savory spice, meaning cumin- or coriander-type spices, and heat spice, meaning chiles or pepper flakes. You can be making a vinaigrette or a Thai curry or a bouillabaisse, but its seasoning involves the same principles on the palate. As long as you can manipulate those things, you can get your palate excited.

If something is heavy or fatty on the tongue, add some vinegar or lemon or another type of acid. If you were making a Thai-style coconut curry that is too fatty and rich from the coconut milk, you would add some grated lime zest, lime juice, and a splash of fish sauce to cut the richness.

When you are adjusting the seasoning of a dish, you need to think about its origin. That is why traveling is so important. For example, you wouldn't use rice wine vinegar in a French bouillabaisse, but you might use a little bit of chili flakes. You must understand the historical context of a dish, which is why you wouldn't thicken an Indian curry with strawberries.

Sharon Hage of York Street in Dallas

When I am building a dish, I use a tray we call “the four seasons,” which is fleur de sel [salt]; red pepper flakes, the ultimate marriage of heat and fruit; dry mustard, which I use all the time; and sumac, which is an acidic component.
When I make a dish, it starts with the dry ingredients first, and the salt is the first dry ingredient. Then I add the heat layer, such as a jalapeño or horseradish. Then I add acid: lemon juice, vinegar, verjus, or all three. Then, at the last second, I add the fat component — the oil or butter — to the sauce, which brings it all together.

**Brad Farmerie of Public in New York City**

When I come up with a new dish, I am looking at two things: The first is building up the richness, and the second is cutting that richness with acidity, spice, or herbaceousness.

I start by thinking, What is the rich component? How can I build richness? If it is a protein, we may cure the meat or fry the fish. If it is a vegetarian dish, I may start with eggplant, which is meaty, so I will build it up with miso or tahini, which will make it even richer and meatier. This is really important in a vegetarian dish, because I hate those flimsy veg plates of grilled vegetables and a lot of salad!

Texture is another way of building richness. If you add miso or tahini, that adds richness and texture. An emulsification also gives a sense of richness in your mind and across your palate. One way to add rich texture in a “fakey-jakey” way is to add palm sugar. It is a less sweet sugar, and we will shave it into a dish halfway through the cooking and temper it with tamarind. We use it so subtly that you don’t even know it is there.

Now that I have my richness, the question becomes, “How can we cut that richness so it is light on the palate and in the belly?” We use a tremendous amount of acid, but it is always in check with what is on the plate. Choosing the right acid or herb will leave a light feeling on the palate and cut a rich dish.

With any fried food, you need a big zap of acidity to get through it. With fried fish, we will use preserved lemon, yogurt, or yuzu with a white soy dipping sauce.

Cured meat is almost the epitome of richness. Cured meats have a salinity to them, and quite often there is sugar to balance the salt as well. You need some punchy flavors to cut the meat, or it will just be heavy on the palate. Traditionally, you would use capers or caper berries. Mustard fruits [known in Italy as mostarda, these are fruits preserved in mustard-flavored sweet syrup] are another traditional approach. I like them because you have the added element of spice. We make our own mustard fruits and bastardize them a little by using kumquats, baby apricots, and gooseberries, which are not traditional in Italy. These fruits simply have beautiful flavor and color. The other thing we do is use whole mustard seeds. Mustard fruits are typically made through a refined process in that they become like a clear jam. We leave ours a little rougher and fold in a little dry mustard in the end to make the colors of the citrus fruits really pop.

Another way we cut richness is by using sweet-and-sour poached vegetables and fruit. We’ll poach fennel or pearl onions in a sweet-sour liquid with licorice and star anise. The family of apples, pears, and quince also holds up very well, as do sour poached plums.

I like aromatic spices [for their ability to cut richness]. If I’m working on a dish inspired by India, my inspirations are the flavors of clove, cardamom, and

---

**Flavor = Taste + Mouthfeel + Aroma + “The X Factor”**
coriander seed. They are aromatic spices that really cut the fat of a dish, so the
dish is not big, fat, and flabby on the palate. Fresh turmeric gives you fruitiness
and upfront flavor with a touch of acid that perks up a dish. If you add fresh
turmeric to your curry, you will make a world of difference by adding this one
small thing.

If I’m working on a dish inspired by Southeast Asia, I like galangal, lemon-
grass, and ginger. They all have natural acidity and zingy spice that will perk up
anything. Even if you are not adding acid to coconut milk but just adding aromat-
ics, it won’t taste heavy.

Emily Luchetti, pastry chef at Farallon in San Francisco
I want my flavors to be clean, crisp, accentuated, and distinguished. From there, I
look at what I feel like making. If I have peaches, do I want to make a trifle or a
napoleon or something else? What is the star of the plate? Is it one thing and
everything else is going to be showing it off? Or are there two main flavors that are
both going to have equal billing? I make a peach-blueberry trifle that has a mascar-
pone cream and is pretty intense. It is one of my favorite summer things to make.
The peaches and blueberries are both the stars. If you make a pumpkin-cranberry
upside-down cake, the pumpkin is the star and the cranberry is an accent.
You have to look at the ingredient and ask, "How am I going to bring out the best of its flavors? Do I cook it, or leave it alone? Does this piece of fruit need to be intensified because it wants to be the star, or is it not good enough on its own?"

When you are working with fresh or dried fruit, the most important thing is the balance of sugar, salt, and lemon. If I am mixing fresh fruit for a shortcake or crisp, I always add some lemon juice and salt, because — just like in savory cooking — it helps bring out the flavor. We are talking a half teaspoon to a teaspoon of lemon and a large pinch of kosher salt.

Whenever you are cooking fruit with sugar to serve with something, taste the fruit first. If it is the peak of summer, that fruit may not need sugar. If you added some anyway, it would dull the flavors and make it taste too sweet. So, taste your fruit — and trust your palate! People trust their palates for savory food all the time. They'll taste a tomato sauce and know it needs some salt. You need to trust your palate for sugar as well. You know when something is too sugary or salty.

When you are working with fresh fruit, the fruit has to be the guide. If you eat a piece of fresh fruit by itself, it is a dessert. So you want the dessert, in the end, to taste better than the fruit itself. To do that, you need to add things that go naturally. Blueberries and peaches go well together. Vanilla goes with practically any fruit. Almonds go with most fruits because they are light nuts that have a lot of flavor but not a lot of fat. Just starting with things that naturally go together, you will have a greater rate of success.

People will read that I think three flavors work in a dessert — then they'll say, "Well, you used four. . . ." That is not the point — the point is knowing when to stop! Too many chefs start adding things that in the end all taste muddled, because nothing can stand out on its own. When you are more restrictive, each thing tastes good on its own — and the dessert becomes more than the sum of its parts. It is hard to know when to stop. Many chefs seem to think, "Oh, I'll just add this dot of mango. . . ." Well, the taste of that one acidic dot can set the whole dessert off.

Flavor is a "language" that anyone who loves the pleasures of the palate will find to be well worth mastering. Once you master the language of flavor, you can use it to communicate — and become a better cook.
**GREAT COOKING = MAXIMIZING FLAVOR + PLEASURE**
**BY TAPPING BODY + HEART + MIND + SPIRIT:**
**COMMUNICATING VIA THE LANGUAGE OF FOOD**

*Happy and successful cooking doesn’t rely only on know-how. It comes from the heart, makes great demands on the palate, and needs enthusiasm and a deep love of food to bring it to life.*

— GEORGES BLANC, MICHELIN THREE-STAR CHEF IN VONNAS, FRANCE

The defining trait of a great cook is more than a great palate, and more than great technique; it is sound judgment. It is not only knowing what to do with ingredients, but also when, where, why, and how to serve them. Cooking involves the thoughtful combination and manipulation of ingredients. Good cooking results in those ingredients tasting even better. Great cooking not only celebrates the ingredients, but also celebrates the moment.

Recipes evolved as a way to teach less experienced cooks how to prepare particular dishes, by providing specific proportions of compatible ingredients along with step-by-step instructions. However, anyone who believes that every recipe followed verbatim will always produce consistent results is kidding themselves, given the diversity within individual ingredients, whether the sweetness of fruit or the thickness of a fish fillet. Slavish followers of recipes, who treat them as gospel instead of guidelines, make the mistake of putting more faith in someone else’s instructions than they do in themselves. Many people would do better in the kitchen if they didn’t blindly follow recipes. In fact, following recipes may be holding you back from achieving your potential as a cook.

Take the time to learn and master some of the general principles of how to make food taste great — such as what to pair with various ingredients, and how to prepare them — which is the subject of this book. After all, more than a dozen years after the advent of the Food Network turned every TV set in this country into a virtual 24/7 cooking school, supplementing the burgeoning food programming on many of the other major channels, Americans are better-trained cooks than at
any previous point in history. Most of us can now whip up a dish with our general
knowledge of how to boil pasta, sauté an onion, or grill a steak. Today, long, de-
tailed recipes are rarely needed for most cooking (with the exception of baking,
whose chemistry requires precise measurements).

Training wheels can be useful when first learning to ride a bike, as can “paint-
ing by numbers” when first learning to paint. Likewise, following a recipe can be
useful when first learning to cook — for understanding the order of completing
certain steps, and internalizing their intrinsic logic. But great cooking should be
more akin to meditation: you — and all of your senses — are in the moment, and
fully awake and aware. You can taste the ingredients, and know what you need to
do to make them taste their best. You know, as chef Judy Rodgers famously told us
for our book Becoming a Chef, to “look out the window and see what the weather
is and decide what the soup wants to be.” Be fully grounded in the moment that is
part of that second, that minute, that hour, that day, that month, that season, that
year of your life — all at once.

To elevate your cooking to a whole new level, develop a better appreciation for
the essence of ingredients, which provides insight into when and how to best use
them. Celebrating the essence of ingredients allows you to work with them more
intuitively and effectively. This book will help you decide what ingredients to reach
for in the kitchen, and why, and what to do with them when you do.

**HOW TO MAKE FOOD TASTE GREAT**

A great cook is able to make food taste great by doing two basic things:

1. Understanding the essence of the **moment**, which comprises everything from
the meal’s driving force to the occasion, to the weather, to the available time,
budget, and/or other resources (for example, ingredients, equipment, etc.).

2. Understanding the essence of the **ingredients**, which comprises their season,
regionality, weight and volume, function, flavor, and/or flavor affinities.

The deeper your understanding of both, the greater your ability to bring them to-
gether into a dish that is the perfect expression of the ingredients and the moment.

**Understanding the Essence of the Moment**

Why do you need or want to cook in the first place? In a day and age when more of
the meals we consume are prepared outside the home than at home, cooking has
become relatively infrequent. So, what’s driving you?

Always keep in mind your starting point in the kitchen, the reference point
serving as the inspiration for your cooking — which can be virtually anything.
Following its essence logically or intuitively will lead you to each subsequent step
toward creating something delicious. Your starting point is your initial desire. It
may be an ingredient, or a dish, or a country: you’re excited to prepare the first
heirloom tomatoes of summer; you're craving your grandmother's cheesecake; or you want a dish that will take you to Italy to relive the flavors you enjoyed on your last vacation.

Other factors provide the parameters of how you'll act on that desire. They might be time ("I want to spend the day cooking for pleasure" versus "I have only fifteen minutes to get something on the table"), budget ($5/person versus "money is no object, so bring on the truffles"), occasion (dinner on a Tuesday night, or someone's birthday), availability of ingredients (your neighbors just gave you fresh vegetables from their garden), season (the arrival of the first asparagus of spring, or the last corn of Indian summer), weather (wanting a chilled lunch to help you cool off on a hot summer day), or something else.

Your starting point, whatever it is, has an essence: Your desire to host a barbecue to celebrate the beautiful summer weather will bring up associations that will in turn bring up other associations, until you have a long list of associations, for example:

- Desire to enjoy the 80-degree sunny summer day (starting point: season, weather)
  → Have a summer barbecue (craving)
  → Invite friends over to enjoy it, too
- Prefer to cool down (function)
  → Serve cold drinks
  → Serve at least some chilled dishes
- Serve corn bought at the market this morning (available resources)
  → Serve corn salsa on grilled chicken or fish
  → Serve corn on the cob
- Have best friends over for dinner (guests)
  → Everyone eats chicken
  → One of them is from New England and can bring lobster
- Avoid turning the oven on (temperature)
  → Cook outside → fire up the grill
  → Cook on the stovetop only → boil water

So, starting with your driving factor and its essence, you can follow these associations to their logical conclusion and come up with the perfect meal. For one person, it might be serving grilled chicken with a corn salsa in the backyard. For another, it might be hosting a lobster and corn boil in an air-conditioned dining room. It's all about taking everything into consideration at once, and using sound judgment to determine how to proceed.

Occasion

Even if it wasn't the driving force behind why you're cooking in the first place, you'll still want to consider the importance and significance of the meal. A quick dinner on a time-pressed weeknight will be different from a dinner made on the weekend when there is more time to enjoy the sensual process of cooking. Keep
the occasion in mind when planning your meal, with the knowledge that any meal can be elevated to a special occasion — or simplified in a crunch. The elements of breakfast take on a different level of importance when they are used for a special brunch. A quick fried egg and a toasted English muffin on a Tuesday can morph into poached eggs with Canadian bacon with hollandaise sauce on an English muffin for a weekend brunch, or vice versa.

But a true special occasion — a birthday, anniversary, or holiday — definitely calls for something equally special to celebrate it. If lack of time is a factor, a birthday isn’t the time to undertake making and decorating a cake from scratch. However, it might inspire you to pick up a half gallon of the birthday boy or girl’s favorite ice cream, toast some pecans, and whip up some homemade chocolate sauce — which would take only minutes, as opposed to hours.
Weather

While seasonality will drive your choice of ingredients, the weather will drive your decision as to how to prepare and serve them. On the coldest days, you'll want to warm your home as well as your body with slow-braised dishes, soups, and stews, and on warmer days, you'll want to keep your home (and yourself) cooler by doing more grilling or on the hottest days serving quick-cooked or even chilled dishes — no matter what season those days may fall in.

Some cooks believe you can serve anything at any time of the year. Our eyebrows have raised upon seeing heavy braised dishes on restaurant menus in August. However, chefs have defended them by arguing that once someone is seated in an air-conditioned dining room, they forget what it's like outside! Those chefs may be giving customers what they want while they are at the table . . . but what happens when those same customers leave the restaurant after finishing their braised short ribs and walk out into the heat and humidity? They might feel as out of sorts as they would wearing long wool overcoats on such a night! A lighter meal on a hot night won't sap your energy in the same way. Even in the middle of summer, there will be unseasonably cool days that might suggest a warm dish that would offend the sensibilities on the season's hottest, most sweltering day. Even during the dead of winter, the sun can break through and create an unseasonably warm day on which hot, slow-cooked braised dishes would not be appealing.

Considering the weather means taking into consideration the natural rhythms of nature. One of the easiest clues available to inform your cooking is to look out the window, and ask yourself what you feel like eating. If you look out the window on a sunny summer morning, are you more tempted by hot oatmeal — or by granola and yogurt? That afternoon, as the temperature rises, does your mouth water thinking of hot tomato soup — or chilled gazpacho? That night, does the temperature fall enough to make you want to turn on the oven to roast a chicken — or would you rather grill it on your stovetop?

On our first visit to a certain New York City restaurant on one of the hottest nights of summer, we were surprised to be sent an amuse-bouche from the kitchen that was a tall glass of hot yellow pepper soup. While the soup itself might have been made from seasonal ingredients and tasty in a vacuum, unfortunately what we remember even more vividly was how unappealing we found it, especially as our first taste after a sweltering taxi ride to the restaurant. If the same soup had been served to us cold, we expect it would have been more successful as the welcoming gesture it was intended to be.

Understanding the Essence of the Ingredients

Once you're clear about "the problem" of what to cook, the right ingredients, well prepared, provide the ideal "solution." To prepare any ingredients well, it's vital to understand and respect their essence.

What do we mean when we talk about an ingredient's "essence"? Every ingredient has associations with it, and the sum total of those associations comprises its essence. An ingredient's essence is more than its flavor. Take two sample ingredients, both salty:
What comes to mind when you think of soy sauce? Common associations besides its saltiness might include Asia (region), rice (as a common flavoring for), and/or scallions (compatible ingredient).

What comes to mind when you think of Parmesan cheese? Aside from saltiness (flavor), its common associations might include Italy (region), pasta or pizza (which it is a common flavoring for), and/or basil and tomatoes (compatible ingredients).

While certain other ingredients — such as chicken, garlic, and onions, which are all used around the world — may be neutral in their universality, many ingredients are rooted in distinct associations.

Some of the primary aspects of any ingredient’s essence include its seasonality, its taste, its volume, its function, its regionality, its weight, and its flavor affinities. While the importance of each factor varies, depending on the dish, the goal when cooking is to ensure that all of these factors are respected in the ingredient’s use.

**Seasonality**

*It is almost a cliché to talk about seasonality if you are a New American chef. You are cooking that way naturally. I had a customer complain that his favorite pea ravioli was not on the menu. I explained that peas were not very good at the time, so that we were featuring corn ravioli. I don’t focus on making an ingredient that is not at its peak taste better; I simply take it off the menu. Chefs still pay more attention to seasonality than customers do. We still have diners who want berries in the middle of February!*

— ANDREW CARMELLINI, A VOCE (NEW YORK CITY)

Cooking with ingredients at their seasonal peak is such a central tenet of good cooking that it bears constant repeating. In stores across the country, you can find almost any ingredient at almost any time of year. However, an ingredient’s mere availability offers no assurances of its quality.

Each season suggests a different palette of ingredients, and different ways of preparing and serving them. Classic holiday dishes represent time-tested ways of celebrating the season: Picture a grilled hamburger followed by a red, white, and blue strawberry shortcake accented with blueberries and whipped cream served on the Fourth of July, or roasted turkey with stuffing, cranberry sauce, and pumpkin pie on Thanksgiving. (If you’re not convinced of the perfection of each dish’s expression of the season and occasion, just imagine eating each menu on the other holiday!) Each season also suggests its own beverages; for example, summer calls more often for lighter-bodied white and rosé wines, just as winter calls for fuller-bodied reds.

**Taste**

Every ingredient has its stereotypical taste (bananas are sweet), plus its actual taste, which may be a function of its age or ripeness. For example, a banana may increase noticeably in sweetness as it ripens and its color changes from green to yellow to brown. That is why it’s crucial to taste your ingredients when cooking.
York Street's Sharon Hage on Classic Flavor Pairings

I try to eat a lot of different foods and read a lot of different types of books to try to break away from classic pairings. I have had a million pork dishes, and I keep thinking that there has to be something else besides pork with sage! I try all those different things then turn to another cook and say, "Got any sage?"

There is a reason for tomatoes with basil, and if I had a million pork dishes, and classic pairings, I'd have thinking that there has to be something else, something with sage on the dish.

Roasted beets work with salty cheese, whether it is [Italian] ricotta salata, or [Mexican] queso fresco, or another country's version of salty cheese.

The fun part is to discover what the classic pairing is, then present it to people in a way that makes them think it is different, while still being true to you as a chef. It would be hard to imagine summer tomatoes without the basil component. We might add some chives or mint or sumac, but the dish will still have some basil as well.

If you don't — and, as a result, don't end up making other adjustments (for example, slightly decreasing the amount of sugar used when using very ripe bananas) — you'll find your dishes to be out of balance. Even seemingly similar ingredients (such as regular versus aged balsamic vinegar, or Italian versus Thai basil) can vary dramatically.

Weight

It was through our study of wine that we developed an appreciation for the critical role of understanding a wine's body, or weight — and, in turn, the relative weights of various foods. In fact, weight has eclipsed color as the key factor in pairing wine with food.

Weight and season often go hand in hand, as we crave lightness in summer and heavier dishes when temperatures fall. In summer, that craving for lightness could be satisfied with a salad of fresh greens topped with shrimp or chicken and tossed in a vinaigrette. Our winter cravings for more substance and warmth might lead us to a hearty stew made with red meat and root vegetables in their own thick sauce.

There is a spectrum of wine and ingredients that suggests itself for warmer versus cooler seasons or days, as well as for lighter versus heavier appetites:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Light</th>
<th>Medium</th>
<th>Heavy</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>White Wines</strong></td>
<td>Riesling</td>
<td>Sauvignon Blanc</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Red Wines</strong></td>
<td>Pinot Noir</td>
<td>Merlot</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Vegetables</strong></td>
<td>Bibb lettuce</td>
<td>Carrots</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Grains</strong></td>
<td>Couscous</td>
<td>Rice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Fruits</strong></td>
<td>Watermelon</td>
<td>Apples</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Seafood</strong></td>
<td>Shrimp, sole</td>
<td>Salmon, tuna</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>White Meat</strong></td>
<td>Chicken, pork, veal</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Red Meat</strong></td>
<td>Beef, lamb, venison</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Sauces</strong></td>
<td>Citrus/lemon</td>
<td>Butter/cream</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
<pre><code>                         | Vinaigrette          | Olive oil      | Meat stock     |
</code></pre>
Volume

One important aspect of an ingredient’s flavor essence is its “volume.” Think of a stereo dial with “1” indicating a “quiet” seasoning of chopped parsley, and “10” suggesting a “loud” mound of freshly chopped habanero chile peppers. You’ll use them very differently to create very different effects, while striving to achieve the same all-important balance in the final dish.

So, is the ingredient you’re working with quiet, moderate, or loud? You need to be aware of an ingredient’s volume whenever combining it with other ingredients. If a dish is overspiced to the point where you can’t taste its essence, it’s wrong. Consider:
Proteins
Light and/or quiet: fish, shellfish, tofu
Medium and/or moderate: white meat (chicken, pork, veal)
Heavy and/or loud: red meat (beef, lamb, venison)

Cooking Techniques
Light and/or quiet: poaching, steaming
Medium and/or moderate: frying, sautéing
Heavy and/or loud: braising, stewing

Herbs
Light and/or quiet: chervil, parsley
Medium and/or moderate: dill, lemon thyme
Heavy and/or loud: rosemary, tarragon

Function
Different tastes serve different functions. Saltiness stimulates thirst (think of all those free salty peanuts in bars!), while sourness quenches it (think lemonade). Saltiness heightens the appetite, making this flavor especially effective in appetizers. Bitterness also stimulates the appetite, and can promote the other tastes with which it is paired while adding a note of lightness to a dish. Soursness is refreshing, and adds a fresh note to any dish to which it is added. Sweetness is famously satiating, making it ideal (not to mention customary) to end a meal with a sweet dessert, or at least a sweet note (such as a cheese course with honey or sweet figs).

Certain foods, such as the spices cinnamon and nutmeg, are thought of as “warming” foods, so their addition to dishes is thought to add a warming quality that might be especially welcomed on a cold day. There are also “cooling” foods (such as cucumber and mint) that can be used just as judiciously.

Keeping an ingredient’s function in mind will help you use it most wisely, and avoid unfortunate mismatches of flavor and function. We still remember an otherwise delicious beet salad we were once served as an appetizer in New Orleans that was so sweet it killed our appetite for the rest of our meal.

Region
Determining the region that will serve as the reference point for whatever you’re cooking is one of the easiest ways to create successful flavor marriages in the kitchen. Thinking regionally is as important to good pairing as thinking seasonally is to good cooking. Many people are familiar with the maxim “If it grows together, it goes together,” and this is still the best place to start as a guide. Knowing what country you want to draw on will narrow your list of ingredient choices, often for the better! For example, as chicken is the world traveler of ingredients, if you’re making a chicken dish, you’ll especially need to decide on a region of inspiration. Are you going to root your dish in Mexico by topping it with salsa, or take it to France by finishing it with a mustard cream sauce? The accompaniments you
choose will reinforce the dish's sense of place. Would rice and beans, or boiled new potatoes, be most appealing served alongside it?

**Flavor Affinities**

A perfect ingredient served plainly can be an extraordinary thing, whether a perfectly ripe and sweet piece of fruit, or a silky slice of raw fish as sashimi. But in the real world, perfect ingredients are all too rare — and there are few ingredients whose flavors can't be helped along by a pinch of this or a splash of that. A sprinkle of sugar will bring out the flavor of strawberries. A squeeze of lime will bring out a melon's sweetness. A drizzle of vinegar will provide a tasty counterpoint for salty French fries.

Understanding what herbs, spices, and other seasonings will best bring out the flavor of whatever it is you're cooking is some of the most important knowledge any cook can master. The pages that follow emphasize modern-day flavor affinities that have been proved in some of the best-respected kitchens in this country in this millennium.

Studying the language and syntax of ingredients in these pages will allow you access to the collective wisdom — and impeccably sound judgment — of some of America's most imaginative chefs.
**Dishes**

**Ceviche Fronterizo: Lime-Marinated Alaskan True Cod with Vine-Ripe Tomatoes, Olives, Cilantro, and Green Chile, Served on Crispy Tostaditas**
— Rick Bayless, Frontera Grill (Chicago)

**Alaskan True Cod and Fresh-Shucked Oysters in Tamazula-Sparked Homemade Cocktail Sauce with Lime, Avocado, White Onion, and Cilantro**
— Rick Bayless, Frontera Grill (Chicago)

**Chatham Bay Codfish: Chanterelle Mushrooms, Sweet Peas, and Tarragon Sauce**
— David Bouley, Upstairs (New York City)

**Atlantic Cod “au Naturel” with Littleneck Clams; Roasted Artichokes, Swiss Chard, and Lemon Marmalade**
— Daniel Boulud, Daniel (New York City)

**Roast Cod on Edamame Risotto with Salt and Pepper Sepia and Carrot-Yuzu Sauce**
— Brad Farmerie, Public (New York City)

**Brioche-Crusted Cod with Baby Artichokes, Oven-Dried Tomatoes, Garlic Mashed Potatoes, and Artichoke Puree**
— Bob Kinkead, Kinkead’s (Washington, DC)

**Cod Baked in a Salt Crust Stuffed with Baby Artichokes, Romesco, Red Wine, Olive, and Preserved Tomato Stew**
— Eric Ripert, Le Bernardin (New York City)

---

**Flavor Affinities**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Affinities</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>cod + capers + chives + lentils + potatoes</td>
<td>cod + cepes (mushrooms) + garlic + lemon + potatoes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**COD, BLACK**

- bell peppers, red
- chile peppers, esp. red
- chives
- garlic
- ginger
- leeks
- miso
- onions
- shiso
- shrimp
- soy sauce
- sugar, brown

**COD, SALT**

**Taste:** salty  
**Weight:** medium  
**Volume:** moderate–loud

- artichoke hearts
- bay leaf
- beans, white
- bell peppers: green, red
- bread crumbs
- capers
- chile peppers
- cilantro
- cream
- French cuisine, esp. Provençal
- garlic
- greens, salad
- lemon, juice
- marjoram
- mint

---

**Dishes**

**Black Cod with Miso Sauce**
— Nobu Matsuhisa, Nobu (New York City)

**Broiled Sake-Marinated Alaskan Black Cod and Shrimp Dumplings in Shiso Broth**
— Hiro Sone, Terra (St. Helena, California)
Dishes
Cherry-Almond Granola with Greek Yogurt and Vanilla Honey
— Daniel Humm, Eleven Madison Park (New York City)

Steel-Cut Oats, Devon Cream, Cinnamon Toast, and Cider-Roasted Apples
— Daniel Humm, Eleven Madison Park (New York City)

Grown-Up Oatmeal Soufflé Served with Maple Syrup and Rum-Soaked Currants
— Patrick O’Connell, The Inn at Little Washington (Washington, Virginia)

Flavor Affinities
octopus + chorizo + lemon
octopus + jalapeño peppers + mint
octopus + orange + potatoes
octopus + sake + sea salt

OIL, AVOCADO
Weight: light
Volume: quiet
Techniques: emulsify, fry, grill, raw, roast, salads, sauté, stir-fry

arugula
asparagus
avocados
basil
chile peppers
corn
cucumber
emulsions
fish
garlic
grapefruit
guinea fowl
lemon, juice
lime, juice
melon
orange, juice
pasta
rabbit
salads and salad dressings
salmon
scallops

I like almond oil with asparagus salad.
— DANIEL HUMM, ELEVEN MADISON PARK (NEW YORK CITY)

I’ll poach everything from saddle of rabbit to guinea fowl to fish — from sturgeon, which holds up nicely, to New Zealand snapper to John Dory — in avocado oil. It gives an incredible texture and depth of flavor. I also like it with vegetarian dishes. I use it in dressings, and it seems to hold an emulsion really well. It has a nice affinity with tomato; I have made tomato water with chardonnay vinegar and avocado oil, and it makes beautiful light dressing. It also goes well with citrus like lemon, lime, or orange. Just like you like to squeeze some citrus over avocado, avocado oil works the same way in reverse.
— BRAD FARMERIE, PUBLIC (NEW YORK CITY)
**Flavor Affinities**
- butternut squash + anchovies + bread crumbs + onions + pasta
- butternut squash + bacon + maple syrup + sage
- butternut squash + bay leaf + nutmeg
- butternut squash + cilantro + coconut + ginger
- butternut squash + crème fraîche + nutmeg + sage
- butternut squash + ricotta cheese + rosemary
- butternut squash + risotto + sage

**SQUASH, KABOCHA**
(See also Squash, Winter)

**Flavor Affinities**
- kabocha squash + coconut +
  - sweet curry
  — DOMINIQUE AND CINDY DUBY, WILD SWEETS (VANCOUVER)

**SQUASH, SPAGHETTI**
(See also Squash, Winter)

**Season:** early autumn—winter
**Weight:** medium
**Volume:** moderate
**Techniques:** bake, boil, or steam; then sauté
- bacon
- basil
- bell peppers
- butter
- cheese: feta, Gorgonzola, Parmesan
- chicken
- chives
- duck
- garlic
- ginger
- honey, chestnut
- olive oil
- olives, black
- oregano
- parsley, flat-leaf
- pasta
- pepper, ground
- salt
- seafood: fish, scallops
- tomatoes
- vinaigrette

**SQUASH, SUMMER**
(See also Zucchini)

**Season:** summer
**Weight:** light—medium
**Volume:** quiet—moderate
**Techniques:** bake, blanch, boil, braise, deep-fry, grill, sauté, steam, stir-fry

- basil
- bell peppers
- butter
- cheese: goat, Gruyère, mozzarella, Parmesan
- chile peppers: dried red, fresh green
- chives
- cinnamon
- coconut
- coriander
- corn
- cream
- cumin
- curry leaves
- dill
- eggplant
- garlic
- lemon, juice
- marjoram
- mint
- mustard seeds, black

**Dishes**
- Red Curry Squash Flan, Orange Jelly, Coconut Emulsion, Sweet Gnocchi, and Curry Gel
  — Dominique and Cindy Duby, Wild Sweets (Vancouver)
- Roasted Squash Ice Cream, Crispy Pumpkin Seeds, Sage
  — Johnny Iuzzini, pastry chef, Jean Georges (New York City)
My favorite fruit to work with is a toss-up between all of the stone fruits [i.e., cherries, plums, apricots, nectarines, and peaches]. Late July, August, and September is my favorite time of year!

— GINA DEPALMA, BABBO (NEW YORK CITY)

When I compose a dish, I work with the season — but like to play with that as well. People will ask how we can have braised short ribs on the menu in summer. I can, because I play with the other elements of the dish. For example, I pair seared watermelon with my short ribs for a refreshing note. From this base, I add other elements to lighten the dish further. The dish also has watermelon radishes that are bright green on the outside and red on the inside so you get another take on “watermelon on watermelon.” The radish also adds a little heat and freshness to cut the richness of the short ribs. The last note in the dish is feta cheese, which adds overall creaminess and goes back to the combination of watermelon and feta that you see in Greek restaurants.

— KATSUYA FUKUSHIMA, MINIBAR (WASHINGTON, DC)

What I like about working with the seasons is that everything that is in season at the same time works together. During the summer when you have tomatoes, melon, and basil, you can make a dish with them and it will work. [His menu includes a salad of grilled watermelon with tomatoes, basil, and aged balsamic.] I don’t try to create new combinations of ingredients. I saw the combination of tomatoes and basil everywhere I ever worked. Should I do something different with tomatoes? No — why? The reason everyone serves this combination is because it is amazing! My approach is to find a new way to serve the tomatoes or the basil. I may make a tomato gazpacho and serve it with basil sorbet, or I could serve different preparations of tomatoes on the plate — fresh, a confit, a juice — and then do the same with the basil, serving it as an oil or a puree.

— DANIEL HUMM, ELEVEN MADISON PARK (NEW YORK CITY)

Look at the weather and the occasion. You want your dessert to match the style and appropriateness of the meal. If it is a barbecue in the summer, I would serve a fruit crisp or pie, summer pudding, or ice cream, and that is pretty much it. People always talk about using fresh and local ingredients, which is very important. But, if you are using chocolate, which is available year-round, and if it is 85 degrees out with 85 percent humidity, the last thing you want is a hot chocolate soufflé. You want chocolate ice cream instead.

— EMILY LUCHETTI, FARALLON (SAN FRANCISCO)

Summer vegetables work with summer herbs. In the Northwest, you will see the same set of ingredients in season in the same week every year. So, you just put them together. For example, sockeye salmon comes into season [during the summer] when squash does, and so do the herbs used in a fines herbs mixture. There’s your dish!

— JERRY TRAUNFELD, THE HERBFARM (WOODINVILLE, WASHINGTON)


Flavor Affinities

- vodka + amaretto + cream + Kahlúa
- vodka + apple + beet + caraway + horseradish
- vodka + apple + cinnamon + cloves + cranberry
- vodka + beef consommé + celery leaf + horseradish
- vodka + blackberries + black pepper + rose
- vodka + carrot juice + lemon thyme + lime
- vodka + celery + lime juice
- vodka + cilantro + coconut + lime + sugar
- vodka + cilantro + lime
- vodka + coffee + cream
- vodka + cranberry + orange
- vodka + cranberry + star anise
- vodka + grapefruit + maraschino liqueur
- vodka + honey + oats
- vodka + lemon + lemon verbena
- vodka + lime + pineapple

Walnuts

- are my favorite nut. I like their bitter quality. They pair well with honey, apples, and pears.
  — Gina Depalma, Babbo (New York City)

Walnuts

- are not as versatile as other nuts. If you look at its flavor, it is the opposite end of the spectrum from a macadamia nut because it has a more complicated flavor. You are not getting something that is buttery that coats your palate; you are getting more nut flavor. I can’t think of many times when you wouldn’t use it, but you might use a smaller amount.
  — Marcel Desaulniers, The Trellis (Williamsburg, Virginia)

Walnuts

- are an oilier nut but still not as strong or dominating as a pecan. I like to combine walnuts with maple in desserts. They work with apples as well as pears or quince.
  — Emily Luchetti, Farallon (San Francisco)

Walnuts are my favorite nut. I like their bitter quality. They pair well with honey, apples, and pears.

Walnuts are not as versatile as other nuts. If you look at its flavor, it is the opposite end of the spectrum from a macadamia nut because it has a more complicated flavor. You are not getting something that is buttery that coats your palate; you are getting more nut flavor. I can’t think of many times when you wouldn’t use it, but you might use a smaller amount.

Walnuts are an oilier nut but still not as strong or dominating as a pecan. I like to combine walnuts with maple in desserts. They work with apples as well as pears or quince.

Flavor Affinities

- chocolate: dark, milk, white
- cinnamon
- coffee
- cognac
- cookies
- corn syrup: light, dark
- cranberries
- cream
- cream cheese
- crème fraîche
- cumin
- dates
- ENDIVE
- figs, esp. dried
- garlic
- ginger
- grapefruit
- grapes
- hazelnuts
- HONEY
- ice cream
- Italian sauces
- kumquats
- lemon: juice, zest
- liqueurs, orange
- maple syrup
- mascarpone

Mediterranean cuisine
Mexican sauces
molasses
nectarines
oatmeal
olive oil
orange: juice, zest
peaches
PEARS
pecans
pepper, esp. white
persimmons
pine nuts
plums
pomegranates
port
praline
PRUNES
pumpkin
quince
raisins
raspberries
rum
salads
salt
sauces
stuffings
Vincotto is a byproduct of balsamic vinegar, and is sweet and sour. It is very syrupy and good drizzled over fruit or cheese.

— SHARON HAGE, YORK STREET (DALLAS)

### VINEGAR, VINCOTTO
(Cooked Wine)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Taste</th>
<th>sour–sweet</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Weight</td>
<td>medium–heavy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Volume</td>
<td>moderate–loud</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- almonds
- bacon
- cheese, burrata
- desserts
- fennel
- figs
- fruit
- Italian cuisine
- peaches
- pears
- plums
- meats, esp. grilled, roasted
- salads and salad dressings
- yogurt

### VINEGAR, WHITE WINE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Taste</th>
<th>sour</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Weight</td>
<td>light</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Volume</td>
<td>quiet–moderate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tips</td>
<td>Can substitute champagne vinegar if needed.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- artichokes
- avocados
- delicate dishes
- fennel
- fish
- leeks
- oils: safflower, sunflower
- olive oil (extra virgin)
- potatoes
- shellfish
- Kahlúa
- LEMON, JUICE
- lemongrass
- lemon thyme
- lemon verbena
- licorice
- lime, juice
- mangoes
- maraschino liqueur
- melon
- oats
- olives, green
- orange, juice
- pepper, black
- pineapple juice
- Polish cuisine
- pomegranate juice
- raspberries
- rose
- RUSSIAN CUISINE
- smoked fish
- star anise
- sugar (simple syrup)
- tomato juice
- triple sec
- vanilla

**VODKA**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Weight</th>
<th>light–medium</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Volume</td>
<td>quiet</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- amaretto
- apples and apple juice
- beef consommé
- beet juice
- berries
- blackberries
- caraway
- carrots, juice
- caviar
- celery and leaves
- celery root
- cilantro
- cinnamon
- cloves
- coffee
- coconut
- cranberry juice
- cream
- cucumber
- currants, black
- ginger
- grapefruit juice
- honey
- horseradish
- kaffir lime leaf

Using vodka as a base spirit in a cocktail makes it drier, while propelling flavors and knitting them together. ... I love the combination of Chopin vodka, carrot juice, lemon thyme. If I have it, I'll use Farigoule — a liqueur from Provence made with wild thyme — and lime.

— JERRI BANKS, COCKTAIL CONSULTANT (NEW YORK CITY)

I love to draw on the roots of a spirit, and to link a cocktail back to the foods of the table of their country of origin. I'll pair [Eastern European] vodkas with the flavors of the zakuski table [which historically features several small dishes of beets, cabbage, eggplant, and mushrooms], such as beets, caraway, and horseradish.

— JERRI BANKS, COCKTAIL CONSULTANT (NEW YORK CITY)
FLAVOR MATCHMAKING: THE CHARTS

Good cooking does not depend on whether the dish is large or small, expensive or economical. If one has the art, then a piece of celery or salted cabbage can be made into a marvelous delicacy; whereas if one has not the art, all the greatest delicacies and rarities of land, sea or sky are of no avail.

— YUAN MEI, EIGHTEENTH-CENTURY CHINESE POET

When you’re creating in the kitchen, the starting point for a dish or a menu can be literally anything. It can begin with the seasonal availability of a particular ingredient — vegetable, fruit, meat, or seafood — or even a cooking style, such as grilling in the summer or braising in the winter. It can begin with a craving for the flavors of a particular country or region: the garlic and herbs of Provence, or the garlic and ginger of Asia. Or it can begin with simple curiosity, the urge to experiment with a new ingredient or technique.

Recognizing this, we’ve provided a similarly broad range of starting points in the A-to-Z (achiote seeds to zucchini blossoms) lists that follow: the seasons (with listings for autumn, spring, summer, and winter); an extensive variety of vegetables, fruits, meat, seafood, and other ingredients; dozens of world cuisines; and a broad array of flavorings and seasonings (from avocado oil to fennel pollen to Kaffir lime), including dozens of different salts, peppers, herbs, spices, oils, and vinegars.

Below each, we’ve distilled and summarized key aspects of an ingredient’s essence: its season, taste, weight, volume, and primary function. You’ll also find its most recommended cooking techniques and some useful tips to keep in mind when working with it. After all, some ingredients lend themselves to being prepared in a particular manner: While chicken is versatile enough to be cooked in a number of ways, delicate fish beg to be served lightly cooked or even raw, while tougher cuts of meat beg to be braised or stewed.

When perusing the listings of compatible flavors, readers of our book What to Drink with What You Eat will recognize our ranking system to let
you know which pairings are truly stellar. Those ingredients that appear in **BOLD CAPS** with an asterisk (*) are ethereal, time-honored classics; these "marriages made in heaven" comprise the top 1 or 2 percent of pairings. Next we have very highly recommended pairings in **BOLD CAPS. Bold**, noncapitalized listings are frequently recommended pairings; and plain text pairings are recommended pairings. But remember: Even when just a single top expert recommends a flavor combination, it's very high praise indeed.

In some cases, we've also noted flavor pairings to **AVOID** or steer clear of, to prevent overpowering or clashing with your star ingredient.

For many listings, we've also indicated "flavor trios" and other "flavor cliques" to get you started on compound flavor combinations. In other cases, you'll find some of America's most creative chefs' signature dishes, so you can gain inspiration from some of the most celebrated restaurant kitchens across the country.

Throughout these pages, you'll also find several insightful sidebars on cooking with herbs, mushrooms, pastas, steaks, and more. They'll serve to help you learn not only the "whats" of combining flavors, but also the "whys" and "hows."

Keep an eye out for the distinctions being made among ingredients. After all, not even all salts are created equal. As you hone your selections, you'll hone the quality of the flavors you're able to create.

Since the turn of the new millennium, we have traveled throughout the United States and Canada, spending thousands of hours interviewing dozens of the most creative chefs and other experts on their most recommended flavor pairings. We've scoured these experts' memories — along with their post-1999 restaurant menus, Web sites, cookbooks, and other highly recommended books — for pairing insights. Then we synthesized their advice into the comprehensive, easy-to-use listings that follow. These listings represent a treasure trove of pairing ideas for you to put to work in your own kitchen.

Armed with the extensive information that follows, you'll learn how to better show off virtually any ingredient, or to recreate the flavors of any world cuisine, you can think of. From here on out, you'll have the expert advice of some of America's most imaginative culinarians at your disposal when you want to inspire your own creativity. Whether you're exploring a new-to-you ingredient or looking for additional ideas for working with an ingredient you've cooked a thousand times, you'll find insightful tips and a plethora of pairings here.
MATCHING FLAVORS

KEY: Flavors mentioned in regular type are pairings suggested by one or more experts. Those in **bold** were recommended by a number of experts. Those in **BOLD CAPS** were very highly recommended by an even greater number of experts. Those in *BOLD CAPS* with an asterisk (*) are “Holy Grail” pairings that are the most highly recommended by the greatest number of experts.

**SEASON:** The ingredient's seasonal peak(s)

**TASTE:** The ingredient's primary taste(s), e.g., bitter, salty, sour, sweet

**FUNCTION:** The ingredient's intrinsic property, e.g., cooling vs. warming

**WEIGHT:** The ingredient's relative density, e.g., from light to heavy

**VOLUME:** The ingredient's relative flavor “loudness,” e.g., from quiet to loud

**TECHNIQUES:** The most commonly used techniques to prepare the ingredient

**TIPS:** Suggestions for using the ingredient

**FLAVOR AFFINITIES:** Compatible flavor groups

**AVOID:** Incompatible flavors

**ACHIOTE SEEDS**
- beef
- chicken
- chiles
- citrus (e.g., sour orange)
- fish
- game birds (e.g., duck, quail)
- garlic
- Mexican cuisine, esp. Yucatán
- oil
- pork
- shellfish, e.g., lobster, shrimp
- shrimp

**Flavor Affinities**
- achioté + pork + sour orange

**ACIDITY** (See Sourness)

**AFGHAN CUISINE**
- almonds
- barley
- breads
- cardamom
- chile pepper
- cinnamon
- cloves
- coriander
- cucumber
- cumin
- dill
- fennel
- fruits, esp. dried
- ginger
- grapes
- kebabs
- lamb
- mint

**Flavor Affinities**
- almonds + cardamom + sugar
cucumber + mint + yogurt

**AFRICAN CUISINE**
(See also Ethiopian and Moroccan Cuisines)
- bananas
- bell peppers
- braised dishes
- mushrooms
- nuts, e.g., almonds
- pasta
- rice, basmati
- sesame
- tomatoes and tomato sauce
- turmeric
- yogurt
AFRICAN CUISINE (CONT.)

chicken
chile peppers, esp. West African
coconuts
corn
fish, esp. coastal
fruits, esp. tropical
garlic
goat
greens, esp. steamed or stewed
mangoes
melons
okra
onions
papayas
peanuts
peas, esp. black-eyed
plantains
soups
stews, esp. meat or vegetable
sweet potatoes
tomatoes
watermelon
yams, esp. West African

AFRICAN CUISINE (NORTH) (See also Moroccan Cuisine)
bell peppers
braised dishes
chicken
chickpeas
couscous
cucumbers
cumin
eggplant
fish
garlic
lamb
mint
parsley
rice
stewed dishes
tomatoes
wheat

Flavor Affinities
cumin + garlic + mint, esp. Northeast Africa

AFRICAN CUISINE (SOUTH)
beans
carrots
chile peppers
cinnamon
cloves
fenugreek
garlic
ginger
lamb
onions
peas
pumpkin
stews
tomatoes
turmeric

Flavor Affinities
lamb + chile peppers + garlic + onions

AFRICAN CUISINE (WEST)
bananas
bell peppers
braised dishes
chicken
chile peppers
corn
goat
mangoes
okra
papayas
peanuts
plantains
rice
soups
stewed dishes
sweet potatoes
tomatoes
wheat
yams

Flavor Affinities
chile peppers + peanuts + tomatoes

ALLSPICE
Season: autumn–winter
Taste: sweet
Weight: medium
Volume: loud
Tips: Add early in cooking.

apples
baked goods
beans
BEEF, esp. braised, corned,
grilled, ground, raw, roasted, or
stewed
beets
breads, esp. breakfast
cabbage
cakes
Caribbean cuisine
carrots
chicken (e.g., Jamaican style)
chickpeas
chile peppers
cinnamon
cloves
cookies
coriander
currants, esp. black
curries and curry powder
Eastern Mediterranean cuisine
eggplant
English cuisine
fish, esp. grilled
fruits, fruit compotes, and jams
game and game birds (e.g., quail)
garlic
ginger
grain
grains
ham
herring, pickled
Indian cuisine
JAMAICAN CUISINE
(e.g., jerk dishes)
ketchup
lamb
mace
MEATS, red, esp. braised, grilled,
or roasted
In Jamaica, allspice is their pepper. It's fruitier than black peppercorns. I think it's especially nice with braised and roasted meats.

— BRADFORD THOMPSON, MARY ELAINE'S AT THE PHOENICIAN
(Scottsdale, Arizona)

Mexican cuisine
Middle Eastern cuisine
mustard
North American cuisine
mustard
onions
pepper, black
pineapple
PUMPKIN
rabbit
rice
rosemary
salsas and sauces
sauerkraut
sausages
spiced cakes
spinach
squash, winter
stews
stocks and broths, chicken
sweet potatoes
thyme
tomatoes
turnips
vegetables, esp. root
West Indies cuisine

Flavor Affinities
allspice + beef + onions
allspice + garlic + pork

ALMOND OIL
(See Oil, Almond)

ALMONDS
Taste: sweet
Botanical relatives: peaches

Function: warming
Weight: medium
Volume: quiet

amaretto
anise, esp. green
apples
apricots
beans
blackberries
brandy
BUTTER, UNSALTED
butterscotch
caramel
cardamom
cayenne
cheese: goat, manchego, ricotta
cherries, esp. sour
chicken
CHOCOLATE: DARK, MILK
chocolate, white
chocolate, white
cinnamon
goat

coconut
Coffee
cornmeal
corn syrup


crab
cranberries
CREAM
cream cheese
crème fraîche
crust: pastry, pie
currants

figs
fish
French pastries
fruits, most
garlic
grapes
Greek cuisine
greens, salad
hazelnuts

HONEY
ice cream
Indian cuisine
Italian sauces
lamb
lavender
lemon: juice, zest
liqueurs, fruit (including orange)
mascarpone
Mediterranean cuisine
Mexican beverages and mole sauces
milk, sweetened condensed molasses
Moroccan cuisine
nectarines
oats
olive oil
olives
orange: juice, zest
paprika
passion fruit
peaches
pears
peanuts
pepper, ground
pine nuts
plums
praline
prunes
quince
raisins, esp. white
raspberries
rhubarb
rice
rosemary
rum
salt: kosher, sea
shellfish
sherry
Spanish cuisine, esp. sauces
strawberries
sugar: brown, white
tea
Turkish cuisine
VANILLA
walnuts
Almonds are fairly versatile in that their flavor is not very specific. When they are manufactured, then they have a distinct flavor: think of Frangelico, almond oil, or marzipan in dessert. In these cases, the almond has a very distinct flavor.

— MARCEL DESAULNIERS, THE TRELLIS (WILLIAMSBURG, VIRGINIA)

If you have some beautiful almonds, there are so many things you can do. You can grind them and make a frangipane and put it in puff pastry. You can put them into biscotti, a cake, or almond ice cream.

— EMILY LUCHETTI, FARALLON (SAN FRANCISCO)

Flavor Affinities
almonds + chocolate + coconut
almonds + coffee + orange
almonds + green anise + figs
almonds + honey + orange zest + raisins

---

**AMARETTO** (sweet almond liqueur)
almonds
apricots
butter
cherries
chocolate
coffee
cream
hazelnuts
Italian cuisine
peaches
pork
sugar

---

**ANCHOVIES**
Taste: salty
Weight: light
Volume: loud

almonds
basil
beans, green
bell peppers, esp. roasted
capers
carrots
cauliflower
celery
cheese: manchego, mozzarella, Parmesan
chives
eggs, hard-boiled
fennel
GARLIC
lemon, juice
lobster
mayonnaise
Mediterranean cuisine
mustard (e.g., Dijon)
nectarines
OLIVE OIL
olives (e.g., black, green, niçoise)
onions
orange, zest
parsley, flat-leaf
pasta
pepper: black, white

No country in the world has anchovies like Spain. They are sophisticated, and the ones from the north of Spain are best because they are bigger. Spanish anchovies are not salty, either. Once you eat one, your life changes forever! I pay a lot for my anchovies — up to seventy-five cents per fillet — and will have to charge $9 for a plate. My customers will say that is too much to pay, and I agree — but if you don't pay, you don't taste. Lately, I have been combining anchovies with nectarines, which I love. I will make a vinaigrette with Pedro Ximénez [i.e., PX sherry], sherry vinegar, and olive oil and it is the perfect dressing — and unique.

— JOSÉ ANDRÉS, CAFÉ ATLÁNTICO (WASHINGTON, DC)
peppers, piquillo
pizza
potatoes
puttanesca sauce (key ingredient)
red pepper flakes
romaine lettuce
rosemary
salads, esp. Caesar (key ingredient)
salmon
salt: kosher, sea
shallots
sherry, PX
tapenade (key ingredient)
thyme
tomatoes
trc
vinegar: champagne, red wine, sherry

**Flavor Affinities**
anchovies + lemon + olive oil + rosemary

---

**ANGEIICA**

**Taste:** bitter, sweet

**Volume:** loud

**Tips:** Add late in cooking; use in baking.
Use to balance high-acid fruit, to reduce the need for sweeteners.

almonds
anise
apricots
candy
cream and ice cream
custards
desserts
fish
fruits

**ginger:** fresh, candied
hazelnuts
juniper berries
lavrader
lemon balm
liqueurs
mushrooms

Angelica pairs well with fresh or candied ginger. And angelica with rhubarb really intensifies the flavor of the rhubarb.
— JERRY TRAUNFELD, THE HERBFARM (WOODINVILLE, WASHINGTON)

nutmeg
oranges
pepper, black
plums
*RHUBARB
salads
shellfish
strawberries

**Flavor Affinities**
angelica + cream + rhubarb

---

**ANISE** (See also Anise, Star, and Fennel)

**Function:** warming

**Weight:** light–medium

**Volume:** moderate–loud

**Tips:** Add early in cooking.

allspice
almonds
apples
baked goods, esp. cakes, cookies
beets
breads, esp. rye
cabbage
cakes
cardamom
carrots
cauliflower
cheese, esp. goat and ricotta
chestnuts
Chinese cuisine
cinnamon
cloves
coffee
cookies

**ANISE** (See also Anise, Star, and Fennel)

**Function:** warming

**Weight:** light–medium

**Volume:** moderate–loud

**Tips:** Add early in cooking.

allspice
almonds
apples
baked goods, esp. cakes, cookies
beets
breads, esp. rye
cabbage
cakes
cardamom
carrots
cauliflower
cheese, esp. goat and ricotta
chestnuts
Chinese cuisine
cinnamon
cloves
coffee

Anise seeds and fennel are used for braising our pork belly. Fennel and pork is a natural, just like in Italian sausage.
— CARRIE NAHABEDIAN, NAHA (CHICAGO)
As a kid, I hated black jelly beans. But I have grown to like all the various forms of anise, and star anise is one of my favorites. My favorite application is when it is infused with milk chocolate. It then has an almost malty-caramely quality to it. It adds that little something that people can’t quite identify. I also love pears with anise, which works well with roasted or poached pears.

— MICHAEL LAISKONIS, LE BERNARDIN (NEW YORK CITY)

I love using star anise in dishes from meats to desserts. I love how it can be kind of meaty in a stew, or kind of sweet, adding bright, warm notes to a pumpkin dessert.

— TONY LIU, AUGUST (NEW YORK CITY)
pepper: black, Szechuan
pineapple
plums, esp. poached
pork
poultry
pumpkin
raspberries
root vegetables
salmon
sauces
scallions
scallops
shellfish
shrimp
soups
soy sauce
stews
stocks: beef, chicken
sweet potatoes
tamarind
teas
tuna
turmeric
vanilla
vegetables, esp. root
Vietnamese cuisine (e.g., pho)
wine, rice

Flavor Affinities
star anise + cream + maple
star anise + milk + milk chocolate
+ orange zest + sugar
star anise + pork + soy sauce + sugar

APPETIZERS
Tips: Saltiness stimulates appetite.
Serve small portions so as not to satiate the appetite too early in a meal.
Accompany appetizers with light-bodied wines.

Dishes
Insalata A Voce: Green Apple, Marcona Almonds, Watercress, Pecorino
— Andrew Carmellini, A Voce (New York City)

Apple and Eggplant Croute with Apple Butter, Cranberry Compote, and Lemon-Poached Apples
— Dominique and Cindy Duby, Wild Sweets (Vancouver)

Apple Softcake with Dark Chocolate and Cinnamon Soup
— Dominique and Cindy Duby, Wild Sweets (Vancouver)

Sautéed Apples, Olive Oil Sponge, Maple-Brown Butter Ice Cream
— Johnny Iuzzini, pastry chef, Jean Georges (New York City)

Poached Granny Smith Apples, Wildflower Honey, and Belgian Endive Leaves
— Thomas Keller, The French Laundry (Yountville, California)

Apple-Lychee Sorbet
— Michael Laiskonis, pastry chef, Le Bernardin (New York City)

Caramelized Apple Sundae with Butter Pecan Ice Cream
— Emily Luchetti, Farallon (San Francisco)

Warm Granny Smith Apple Tart with Buttermilk Ice Cream
— Patrick O’Connell, The Inn at Little Washington (Washington, Virginia)

APPLES
Season: autumn
Taste: sweet, astringent
Function: cooling
Weight: medium
Volume: quiet–moderate

Techniques: bake, caramelize, deep-fry (e.g., as fritters), grill, poach, raw, sauté, stew
allspice
almonds
The combination of apple and celery works. A tart green apple sorbet is not going to knock your socks off, because you are programmed to know it. When you add the flavor of celery, you get something new. I also love the flavors of apple and fennel together, especially in sorbet.
— MICHAEL LAISKONIS, LE BERNARDIN (NEW YORK CITY)

I make an apple confit of thinly sliced apples with cinnamon caramel powder layered between the apples and baked slowly. When the dish is served, next to the apples is a small pile of dates poached in syrup with vanilla. The other flavors on the plate are lemon confit, quince, raw apple with apple cider gelée, and ras el hanout (a Moroccan spice blend).

For this dish you need a contrast for the sweetness, so the role of the lemon confit is to cleanse and refresh. If the confit was not there, you would have a bite of the sweet date and be done. The date and lemon is like a salad. The line drawing this together is the quince and dates that come from the Middle East and that was the line to ras el hanout.
— MICHAEL LAISKONIS, LE BERNARDIN (NEW YORK CITY)

If you cook apples on top of the stove, some varieties will have a lot of juice while others will have none at all. Fuji, Gala, and Golden Delicious apples tend to be juicy, while Granny Smith apples are often drier. With different types of apples, you often don't know exactly what they will do. So if I'm going to serve apples with gingerbread, I will sauté them in a little sugar and see what happens. If they are letting out a bunch of juice, I won't add much sugar. If they are dry, I'll add some apple juice or Calvados.
— EMILY LUCHETTI, FARALLON (SAN FRANCISCO)

When I make an apple pie, I won't use any fewer than three different kinds of apples for their different textures and sweetmesses, which ensures that every single bite is interesting. I'll use Galas or Golden Delicious apples for their sweetness in the middle of the pie, and soft Jonathans or McIntoshes on top for their ability to melt into the others, and Braeburns or Granny Smiths on the bottom for their ability to stay firm. . . . I can't imagine an apple pie without cinnamon, a splash of lemon juice, and a pinch of salt.
— SHARON HAGE, YORK STREET (DALLAS)

Apples and caramel are a wonderful combination and depending on what nut you add it will take the combination in very different directions. If you add pecans, it would make the combination a heavier winter dessert, versus adding almonds, which would keep it lighter. Both work; you just need to decide how heavy you want the dish.
— EMILY LUCHETTI, FARALLON (SAN FRANCISCO)
Apple and shiso work well together. I especially like them together in a sorbet. I will use a Granny Smith apple that has a nice tartness combined with a little sugar, lemon, and then the shiso. The shiso has a cumin and cinnamon flavor that is a natural with apple.

—JERRY TRAUNFELD, THE HERBFARM (WOODINVILLE, WASHINGTON)

If you stay in the boundaries of what people think a dessert should be it gets very hard to do something new. We explain that they already eat carrot cake. We think parsnip will work instead of carrot and that kabocha squash will work instead of pumpkin in a pie.

When people see eggplant in a dessert they automatically think it will not work. You have to hide the unusual element and play up what people know already. The boundaries are limitless when you think of all the crossovers between sweet and savory. Duck à l’orange is a fruit and meat combined, so why not use bacon in a dessert? A pancake with maple syrup and bacon on the plate is really sweet and savory. So people already eat these combinations unconsciously.

For our apple-eggplant dessert, we start with a choux dough pie crust. Then we layer an almond cream-like custard. Then we alternate apple and eggplant slices side by side. We use baby eggplant because it has a spongy texture and sucks up moisture from the cream that can otherwise make the crust soggy and absorb the juice and flavor from the apples that would normally just evaporate. So when you eat the eggplant and apples, the eggplant tastes like apples.

—DOMINIQUE AND CINDY DUBY, WILD SWEETS (VANCOUVER)

I have always been very fond of chef Frédy Girardet [who earned three Michelin stars at his restaurant in Switzerland before retiring in 1996]. When I was young, I cooked almost every recipe from his book and visited his restaurant. One of his most interesting desserts was an apple dessert made of apples in the shape of little balls. The dessert broke away from cooking apples whole in the traditional way, which alone inspired me. He cooked them over a very high heat for two minutes and put them into a red wine reduction that had cinnamon, orange peel, and sugar. This was put onto a sheet tray that needed to be shaken for an hour so the apples would not dry out. The apples would absorb these flavors like a sponge and would then be served with vanilla ice cream.

In that spirit, we transformed this dessert. We transformed the wine by “espherication” so that it creates a bubble of liquid that explodes in your mouth. We cut apples with a melon baller, then vacuum-packed the apples with the wine but cooked it in such a way that the apples stayed hard and absorbed the wine flavor.

—José Andrés, Café Atlántico (Washington, DC)

We serve a dish of smoked oysters with apples. We smoke the oysters over applewood, and so it seemed logical to add apple to the dish. We serve it with a puree of apple with juniper that just plays beautifully off the oyster.

—Katsuya Fukushima, Minibar (Washington, DC)
soups
sour cream
star anise
**SUGAR: BROWN, WHITE**
sweet potatoes
tarragon
tarts
thyme
vanilla
verjus
vermouth
vinegar: apple cider, raspberry
**WALNUTS**
wine: red, dry white
yogurt

**Flavor Affinities**
- apples + almonds + caramel
- apples + almonds + Armagnac + crème fraîche + raisins
- apples + apricots + pine nuts + rosemary
- apples + brown sugar + cream + walnuts
- apples + Calvados + cranberries + maple syrup
- apples + caramel + cinnamon
- apples + caramel + cinnamon + dates + lemon confit + quince + ras el hanout + vanilla
- apples + caramel + peanuts
- apples + caramel + pecans
- apples + caramel + pistachios + vanilla
- apples + celery + walnuts
- apples + cinnamon + cranberries
- apples + cinnamon + dark chocolate + yams
- apples + cream + ginger
- apples + ginger + hazelnuts
- apples + ginger + lemon + quince + sugar
- apples + honey + lemon thyme
- apples + raisins + rum
- apples + red cabbage + cinnamon

---

**APRICOTS — IN GENERAL**

**Season:** summer
**Taste:** sweet
**Weight:** medium
**Volume:** moderate
**Techniques:** bake, grill, poach, raw, stew

---

alaspeice
**ALMONDS**
amaretto
anise
**apples**
apricot brandy
bananas
blackberries
blueberries

brandy
butter, unsalted
caramel
cardamom
cayenne
cheese (e.g., Brie, Reblochon, ricotta)
cheesecake
cherries
chicken
chocolate, white
cinnamon
coconut
coffee and espresso
cognac
coriander
cranberries

**CREAM AND ICE CREAM**

- crème anglaise
- custards (e.g., crème brûlée)
- duck
- foie gras
- game
- garlic
- ginger
- hazelnuts
- honey
- ice cream, esp. vanilla
- Kirsch
- lamb
- **LEMON:** juice, zest
- lemon verbena
- liqueurs: apricot, nut
- maple syrup
- mascarpone
- Mediterranean cuisine
- meringue
- Middle Eastern stews
- mint (garnish)
- Moroccan cuisine
- nectarines
- nutmeg
- nuts
- oats and oatmeal
- onions, esp. yellow
- orange: juice, zest
- orange liqueur
- peaches
**Flavor Affinities**

**APRICOTS, DRIED**

**Techniques:** poach, stew

- allspice
- cherries, dried
- cinnamon
- currants
- custard
- French toast
- ginger
- hazelnuts
- honey
- ice cream
- lemon: juice, zest
- Madeira
- Moroccan cuisine
- orange: juice, zest
- pancakes/crepes
- pistachios
- pork
- prunes
- pumpkin seeds
- raisins
- rice pudding
- sugar
- tamarind paste
- vanilla
- wine, sweet white (e.g., Muscat)

**Flavor Affinities**

dried apricots + dried cherries +
ginger + orange + pistachios

---

**ARTICHOKEs**

**Season:** spring–early autumn
**Weight:** medium
**Volume:** moderate–loud

**Techniques:** bake, boil, braise, broil, deep-fry, grill, raw, roast, sauté, steam, stew

- aioli
- anchovies
- arugula
- bacon
- basil
- bay leaf
- beans, fava
- beets
- bell peppers, esp. roasted
- bread crumbs
- butter
- capers
- carrots

---

**ARGENTINIAN CUISINE**

(See also Latin American Cuisine)

- beef
- corn
- peaches
- pumpkin
- sweet potatoes

---

**AROMA**

When looking to make a big impact with aroma, turn to:

- chocolate
- cinnamon
- herbs
- pineapple
- sous-vide cooking
- spices
- star anise
- truffles
- vanilla

We believe as much as 90 percent of flavor is due to aroma as opposed to taste.

— DOMINIQUE AND CINDY DUBY,
WILD SWEETS (VANCOUVER)

---

**Flavor Affinities**

Apricots are much better cooked than raw. It is rare that you find a fruit that reaches its full potential as cooked rather than raw, but an apricot is one. A so-so apricot poached will turn into heaven. They are great with either chamomile or lavender.

— GINA DEPALMA, BABBO (NEW YORK CITY)

Apricot is a fruit you need to cook to help unleash its flavors. A bite of raw apricot is kind of bland and doesn't excite very much. If you throw that same apricot into the oven and heat it up a bit, it turns into a whole different fruit. Apricot with vanilla is a match made in heaven.

— EMILY LUCHETTI, FARALLON (SAN FRANCISCO)
Dishes

Fettuccine with House-Made Pancetta, Artichokes, Lemon, and Hot Chiles
— Mario Batali, Babbo (New York City)

Spring Artichoke Fritto with Yogurt, Mint, and Lemon Aioli
— Andrew Carmellini, A Voce (New York City)

My mom made artichokes that we dipped in mayonnaise, so I tweaked that idea for the stuffed artichoke we serve here. Panko bread crumbs are mixed with chopped mint, salted, and stuffed into the artichoke cavity. The homemade mayonnaise I serve is made with eggs and just a little olive oil but mostly melted butter, which makes it richer and more flavorful — which is based on how it is made for the Chinese dish of shrimp and walnuts. The mayonnaise is then seasoned with anchovies, red pepper flakes, and onion confit.
— TONY LIU, AUGUST (NEW YORK CITY)

cashews
celery
cheese: Emmental, goat, Gruyère, Parmesan
chervil
chicken
chives
coriander
cream
crème fraîche
eggs: yolk, hard-boiled
French cuisine
GARLIC
grapefruit
ham (e.g., Serrano)
hazelnuts
hollandaise sauce
Italian cuisine
leeks
LEMON: confit, juice, zest
lobster
mayonnaise
Mediterranean cuisine
MINT
Moroccan cuisine
mushrooms
mustard, Dijon
nuts: cashews, hazelnuts, walnuts
oil: hazelnut, peanut
OLIVE OIL
olives: black, niçoise
ONIONS, ESP. SWEET AND YELLOW
orange
pancetta
PARSLEY, FLAT-LEAF
PEPPER: BLACK, WHITE
pesto
piquillo peppers
potatoes
prosciutto
radicchio

Flavor Affinities

artichokes + butter + garlic + lemon + parsley
artichokes + cream + Parmesan cheese + thyme
artichokes + garlic + lemon
artichokes + garlic + lemon + mint
artichokes + garlic + lemon + olive oil
artichokes + garlic + lemon + olive oil + thyme
artichokes + garlic + mint
artichokes + garlic + Parmesan cheese + thyme
artichokes + garlic + sage
artichokes + lemon + mint + yogurt
artichokes + lemon + onions
artichokes + mushrooms + onions + sausage
artichokes + olive oil + Parmesan cheese + white truffles

red pepper flakes
rice
risotto
rosemary
saffron
sage
salads
SALT, KOSHER
savory
shallots
shellfish (e.g., crab)
sherry, dry
shrimp
soy sauce
Spanish cuisine
spinach
stock, chicken
sugar (pinch)
tapenade
tarragon, fresh
THYME, FRESH
TOMATOES
truffles, black
tuna
vinaigrette
vinegar: balsamic, rice, sherry
white wine
walnuts
WINE, DRY WHITE
yogurt
ARTICHOokes, JERUSALEM
Season: autumn–spring
Weight: medium
Volume: moderate
Techniques: bake, blanche, cream, fry, roast, sauté

anise
bacon
bay leaf
butter
celery
cheese, goat
cervil
chives
coriander
cream
cumin
dill
fennel leaves
fennel seeds
garlic
ginger
hazelnuts
leeks
lemon, juice
mace
meats, esp. roasted
morels
nutmeg
oil: nut, sunflower seed
olive oil
onions
parsley, flat-leaf
pepper, black
potatoes
rosemary
sage
salmon
salt, sea

Dishes
Jerusalem Artichoke Soup, Sweet Garlic Flan, “Sockeye” Salmon Tartare, Poached Quail
Egg, and Crisp Sunchokes
— Carrie Nahabedian, Naha (Chicago)

Dishes
Arugula Risotto with Roquefort and Pignoli Nuts
— Gabriel Kreuther, The Modern (New York City)

Arugula Salad with Cucumber, Mt. Vikos Feta, Mint, Coriander Vinaigrette, and Niçoise Olives
— Judy Rodgers, Zuni Café (San Francisco)

Sautéed Arugula with Paneer Cheese and Roasted Cashews
— Vikram Vij and Meeru Dhalwala, Vij’s (Vancouver)

Flavor Affinities
Jerusalem artichoke + goat cheese
Jerusalem artichoke + hazelnuts
Jerusalem artichoke + lemon + morels

ARUGULA (See also Lettuces
— Bitter Greens and Chicories)
Season: spring–summer
Taste: bitter
Weight: light–medium
Volume: moderate–loud
Techniques: braise, raw (salads), sauté, soups, wilt

almonds
basil
beans, white
bell peppers, esp. red
cheese: Cabrales, feta, goat, mozzarella, Parmesan
chicken
cilantro

clams
corn
cucumbers
dill
eggs, esp. hard-boiled endive
fennel
fish (e.g., salmon, tuna)
garlic
grapes
Italian cuisine
lemon juice
lettuces
lovage
Mediterranean cuisine
mesclun salad greens (key ingredient)
mint
mushrooms
mussels
nuts
olive oil
olives, black
oranges, esp. blood
pancetta
parsley
pasta
pears
pesto
pine nuts
potatoes
prosciutto
radicchio
radishes
risotto
salads and salad greens
ARUGULA (CONT.)

salt, esp. sea
shallots
shellfish (e.g., shrimp)
tomatoes
tuna
vinaigrettes
vinegar: balsamic, champagne, red wine, sherry, white wine
watercress

Flavor Affinities
arugula + balsamic vinegar + lemon
+ olive oil + Parmesan cheese
arugula + Cabrales cheese + endive
+ grapes
arugula + cucumber + feta cheese + mint
arugula + endive + radicchio
arugula + fennel + pears
arugula + pears + prosciutto

ASIAN CUISINE
(See Chinese, Japanese, Vietnamese, etc. Cuisines)

ASPARAGUS
Season: spring
Weight: light-medium
Volume: moderate
Techniques: blanch, boil, deep-fry, grill, pan roast, simmer, steam, stir-fry

almonds
anchovies
artichokes
basil
bay leaf
beets
bread crumbs
butter, brown
BUTTER, UNSALTED
capers
caraway seeds
carrots
cayenne
CHEESE: chèvre, Fontina, goat,

Muenster, PARMESAN, PECORINO, ricotta, Romano
chervil
chives
crab
cream, heavy
crème fraîche
dill
EGGS AND EGG DISHES (e.g.,
coddled, hard-boiled omelets)
fava beans
French cuisine
garlic
ginger
ham
hollandaise sauce
Italian cuisine
leeks
LEMON: JUICE, ZEST
lemon thyme
lime, juice
lobster
Marsala wine
mascarpone
mayonnaise
mushrooms, esp. cremini,
morels, shiitakes
mustard, Dijon
oil: hazelnut, peanut, sesame,
truffle
OLIVE OIL
onions, esp. spring, yellow
orange
oysters
parsley
parsley, flat-leaf
pasta
peas
PEPPER: BLACK, WHITE
peppers, piquillo

Dishes
Ricotta Gnocchi with Asparagus, Morels, and Pine Nuts
— Dan Barber, Blue Hill at Stone Barns (Pocantico Hills, New York)

Asparagus and Ricotta “Mezzalune” with Spring Onion Butter
— Mario Batali, Babbo (New York City)

Salad of Sacramento Delta Green Asparagus, Spring Garlic, Marinated Sweet Peppers, with Young Arugula and Yellow Pepper Gastrique
— Thomas Keller, The French Laundry (Yountville, California)

Warm Salad of Sacramento Delta Green Asparagus, Melted Cipollini Onion Rings, Soft-Boiled Hen Egg, and Country Bread Croutons
— Thomas Keller, The French Laundry (Yountville, California)

Green Asparagus Soup with Gyromitre Mushrooms and Soft-Poached Farm Egg
— Gabriel Kreuther, The Modern (New York City)

Warm Salad of Grilled Asparagus and Prawns with a Sherry Vinaigrette
— Patrick O’Connell, The Inn at Little Washington (Washington, Virginia)

Vegetarian Sushi: Asparagus and Roasted Bell Pepper Roll
— Kaz Okochi, Kaz Sushi Bistro (Washington, DC)

Asparagus and Morel Mushroom Salad: Pancetta, Fiddlehead Ferns, Vermont Shepherd Cheese, and a Mushroom Reduction
— Alfred Portale, Gotham Bar and Grill (New York City)

Terrine of Green and White Asparagus, Roasted Beet Root Salad, Asparagus Juices
— Rick Tramonto, Tru (Chicago)
Daniel Humm of New York's Eleven Madison Park on Making Asparagus Soup

Making and seasoning soup is one of the best ways to learn about flavor. Let's make asparagus soup:

- You need a lot of asparagus flavor.
- You need acidity.
- You need sweetness that will come from the asparagus.
- You need the right amount of salt.
- You need just the right amount of spice, so that it doesn't actually taste spicy. We use a lot of cayenne, but you would never know it is there; it is just an accent.
- You need fresh lime juice to finish.

Soup is a play of balance when you have a lot of flavor. You can add a lot of salt and it won't taste salty. You can add a lot of acid and it won't taste acidic. But you still have a bold-flavored soup. It's like winemaking; at some point, there is a balance of all the flavors.

The first thing you need to do is get all the asparagus flavor into the soup at the start. We save our asparagus liquid from all the asparagus we cook to use for asparagus stock.

Making the soup: We sweat the asparagus [that is, cook it over low heat in a little fat, generally in a covered pot or pan] very slowly. When we add wine, we do it multiple times, adding a little at a time and reducing it, then repeating the process. What this does is concentrate the flavor at each step. It makes a big difference [before adding the asparagus liquid].

Finishing the soup: A soup may taste seasoned, but it still needs to be “woken up.” You taste the asparagus, but maybe it doesn't blow you away at first. To do that, you need acid and cayenne. We season the soup with lime because it is a stronger acid and yet has less flavor than lemon. If I use lemon to get as much acid as I need for the soup, I will need to use so much that the soup will taste lemony instead.

Flavor Affinities

asparagus + capers + ham + shrimp
asparagus + cayenne + lime
asparagus + chervil + chives + garlic + morel mushrooms + shallots
asparagus + crab + morel mushrooms + ramps
asparagus + garlic + ginger + sesame
asparagus + garlic + leeks + onions + potatoes
asparagus + goat cheese + mascarpone + thyme
asparagus + ham + morel mushrooms + Parmesan cheese
asparagus + lemon + olive oil + black pepper
asparagus + morel mushrooms + ramps
asparagus + Parmesan cheese + eggs
asparagus + Parmesan cheese + pancetta + vinaigrette
asparagus + prosciutto + goat cheese + chervil
shrimp  
stock, chicken  
sugar (pinch)  
tarragon  
vinaigrette  
vinegar: champagne, white  
wine, Riesling

**Flavor Affinities**
white asparagus + hazelnuts + Parmesan cheese + truffle oil  
white asparagus + lemon + cepes mushrooms + parsley  
white asparagus + mustard + olive oil + vinegar

### ASTRINGENCY

**Taste:** astringent  
**Function:** cooling

- apples (astringent-sweet)  
- artichokes  
- asparagus  
- bananas, unripe (astringent-sweet)  
- basil  
- beans  
- berries  
- broccoli  
- buckwheat  
- cashews  
- cauliflower  
- coffee  
- cranberries  
- figs (astringent-sweet)  
- fruits: dried, raw, unripe  
- grapes (astringent-sour-sweet)  
- hazelnuts  
- herbs  
- honey  
- legumes  
- lentils  
- lettuce  
- mace  
- marjoram  
- okra  
- parsley  
- peaches (astringent-sweet)  
- pears (astringent-sweet)  
- persimmons  
- plums (astringent-sweet)  
- pomegranates (astringent-sour-sweet)  
- quinoa  
- rhubarb  
- rye  
- saffron  
- sprouts  
- tea  
- turmeric  
- turnips  
- vegetables, raw  
- walnuts

### AUSTRALIAN CUISINE

barbecued foods  
beef  
cheese  
fish  
fruits, fresh  
lamb  
nuts, macadamia  
seafood  
sHELLFISH, esp. shrimp  
vegetables, fresh  
wines  
yabbies

NOTE: Akin to the “New American” cuisine that incorporates ingredients and techniques from around the world, “Mod Oz” (modern Australian) cuisine combines its British heritage with influences from other parts of Europe as well as Asia.
The earthy flavors of autumn come together in our chanterelle mushroom and lentil soup with sautéed foie gras.
— HIRO SONE AND LISSA DOUMANI, TERRA (ST. HELENA, CALIFORNIA)

In the autumn, I use walnut vinegar, which is red wine vinegar with macerated walnuts in it. It is great on a dish of sweetbreads and hazelnuts.
— ANDREW CARMELLIINI, A VOCE (NEW YORK CITY)

When I think of autumn, I think of apples, pears, quince — which is so underrated — figs, and pumpkins.

I work with apples and pears, which you can start using in September, especially with the early apples like Gravenstein in the Bay Area. I try not to use pumpkin until close to Halloween, because no matter what you do with it, it will still taste like pumpkin. It’s not like berries or apples that you can do a thousand things with. As a pastry chef, if I serve pumpkin too soon, people will get sick of it — and if I take it off the menu, there is nothing to replace it with. So I try to wait so I don’t peak too early.

Figs are great for fall. The problem with figs is that there are not that many fig lovers out there. There are a lot more peach, chocolate, and apple lovers than there are fig lovers. When I make a fig dessert, I’ll pair it with a raspberry or late summer fruit so it’s more likely to meet with customer acceptance.

In the fall, I’ll make more cakes. Fall also turns into caramel season, and fall fruits work so well with caramel. I keep a lighter hand with caramel in the fall because it is being combined with fruit versus chocolate.
— EMILY LUCETTI, FARALLON (SAN FRANCISCO)

chestnuts (peak: October–November)
chile peppers
cocnut (peak: October–November)
corn (peak: September)
cranberries (peak: September–December)
cucumbers (peak: September)
dates
duck
eggplant (peak: August–November)
fennel
figs (peak: September–October)
foie gras
garlic (peak: September)
gooseberries (peak: June–September)
grains
grapes (peak: September)
heavier dishes
huckleberries (peak: August–September)
kale (peak: November–January)
kohlrabi (peak: September–November)
lentils
lofrage (peak: September–October)
lychee nuts (peak: September–November)
mushrooms: chanterelles (peak: April–October), porcini (peak: September–October)
nectarines (peak: July–September)
nuts
okra (peak: July–September)
oranges, blood (peak: November–February)
oysters (peak: September–April)
partridge (peak: November–December)
passion fruit (peak: November–February)
pears (peak: July–October)
peas (peak: June–September)
persimmons (peak: October–January)
peach (peak: October–December)
pistachios (peak: September)
plums (peak: July–October)
polenta
pomegranates (peak: October–December)
pumpkins (peak: September–December)
quinces (peak: October–December)
salsify (peak: November–January)
scallops
seeds, sunflower
spices, warming (e.g., black peppercorns, cayenne, cinnamon, chili powder, clove, cumin, mustard, etc.)
squash, winter (peak: October–December)
stuffing
sweetbreads
sweet potatoes (peak: November–January)
tomatoes (peak: September)
turkey
vinegar, red wine
walnuts
watermelon (peak: July–September)
yams (peak: November)
zucchini (peak: June–October)
**Dishes**

*Avocado and Grapefruit with Poppy Seed Dressing*
— Ann Cashion, Cashion’s Eat Place (Washington, DC)

*Creamy Avocado Pudding with Pink Grapefruit Reduction and Candied Zest*
— Dominique and Cindy Duby, Wild Sweets (Vancouver)

**AVOCADO OIL** (See Oil, Avocado)

**AVOCADOS**

*Season:* spring–summer

*Botanical relatives:* allspice, bay leaf

*Weight:* medium–heavy

*Volume:* quiet

*Techniques:* raw

*Tips:* Use to add richness to a dish.

- arugula
- bacon
- basil and Thai basil
- beans, black
- bell peppers, esp. red
- butter, unsalted
- Central American cuisine
- chayote
- chervil
- chicken
- chile peppers: chipotle, jalapeño, serrano
- chives
- cilantro
- corn and masa
- crab
- cream, heavy
- crème fraîche
- cucumbers
- cumin
- dashi
- endive, esp. Belgian
- fennel
- fish
- frisée
- fruits, esp. tropical
- garlic
- grapefruit
- guacamole (key ingredient)
- jicama
- lemon: juice, zest
- LIME, JUICE
- lobster
- mangoes
- mayonnaise
- Mexican cuisine
- oil, canola
- olive oil
- ONIONS, ESP. RED, spring, white
- orange
- parsley, flat-leaf
- pepper: black, white
- radishes
- rocket
- sake
- salads, esp. green, seafood
- salsa
- SALT: KOSHER, SEA
- sandwiches
- scallions
- shellfish (e.g., shrimp)
- shrimp
- smoked fish (e.g., trout)
- soups
- sour cream
- Southwestern cuisine
- soy sauce
- spinach
- stocks: chicken, vegetable
- Tabasco sauce
- tarragon
- tequila
- tomatillos
- tomatoes
- vinaigrette
- VINEGAR: balsamic, cider, tarragon, white wine
- walnuts, oil
- yogurt

**BACON**

*Taste:* salty

*Weight:* medium

*Volume:* moderate

*Techniques:* broil, roast, sauté

- aioli
- avocados
- beans (e.g., black, fava, green)
- breakfast
- butter, unsalted

**Flavor Affinities**

* avocado + bacon + scallions + tomatoes
* avocado + basil + red onions + tomatoes + balsamic vinegar
* avocado + chiles + cilantro + lime + black pepper + salt + scallions
* avocado + cilantro + lime juice
* avocado + crab + grapefruit + tomato
* avocado + crème fraîche + grapefruit
* avocado + endive + frisée + lemon juice + sea salt
* avocado + jalapeño chiles + cilantro + cumin + garlic + lime + onion
* avocado + lemon + smoked trout

*Avocados* are so rich that we always season them with a lot of *fleur de sel* and lemon juice, and toss them with frisée and endive. Avocados need something bitter for balance.

— SHARON HAGE, YORK STREET (DALLAS)
Bacon can be salt, fat, and/or smoke, depending on the bacon you choose. You can also play with its texture, depending on whether you are using pork belly or crispy bacon. It is wonderful with vegetables. The fat is delicious, so if you are braising onions in bacon fat, reduce that down, and add a little onion jus and vinegar, you have a great sauce. Bacon just brings another layer of flavor to the vegetables. My dish of Berkshire pork chop with scarlet turnips, roasted rhubarb, and smoked bacon with cherry-almond salsa seca represents the relationship between fat, salt, sugar, and acid; they are all there. The bacon brings complexity to the pork; the cherry brings acid balance; and the almond brings a different kind of fat with crunch. The almonds in the dish are marcona, and every tenth one is extremely bitter, which adds another layer of complexity.

— TRACI DES JARDINS, JARDINIERE (SAN FRANCISCO)

Dishes

Braised Bacon with Spring Vegetables and White Horseradish Broth
— Dan Barber, Blue Hill at Stone Barns (Pocantico Hills, New York)

Smoked Bacon and Egg Ice Cream with Pain Perdu, Tea Jelly
— Heston Blumenthal, The Fat Duck (England)

Berkshire Pork Chop with Scarlet Turnips, Roasted Rhubarb, and Smoked Bacon with Cherry-Almond Salsa Seca
— Traci Des Jardins, Jardinière (San Francisco)

BALANCE

Tips: Seek balance in every dish you make:
• tastes (e.g., sourness vs. saltiness; sweetness vs. bitterness)
• richness (e.g., fat) vs. relief (e.g., acidity, bitterness)
• temperatures (e.g., hot vs. cold)
• textures (e.g., creamy vs. crunchy)
Balance taste by adding its opposite or its complement.
BALSAMIC VINEGAR
(See Vinegar, Balsamic)

BANANAS
Season: winter
Taste: sweet, astringent
Function: cooling
Weight: medium
Volume: quiet
Techniques: bake, broil, caramelize, deep-fry, grill, poach, raw, sauté
Tips: Sugar enhances the flavor of bananas.

allspice
almonds
apricots
Armanagnac
baked goods (e.g., muffins, quick breads)
banana liqueur
blackberries
blueberries
brandy
breakfast
butter, unsalted
buttermilk
butterscotch
cakes
Calvados
Caramel
cardamom
cashews
cherries
chile peppers: habanero, jalapeño, serrano
CHOCOLATE: dark, white
cinnamon
cloves
COCONUT AND COCONUT MILK
coffee
cognac
CREAM AND ICE CREAM
cream cheese
crème anglaise
dishes
Chocolate-Banana Flan, Exotic Fruit Jelly, Spiced Fritters, Faux Foie Gras Emulsion, and Cumin Gel
— Dominique and Cindy Duby, Wild Sweets (Vancouver)

Sticky Toffee Pudding with Bananas, Medjool Dates, Oatmeal Ice Cream, Root Beer Reduction
— Gale Gand, pastry chef, Tru (Chicago)

Banana-Coconut Split with Vanilla Ice Cream, Candied Coconut, Dulce de Leche, Fudge Sauce
— Emily Luchetti, pastry chef, Farallon (San Francisco)

Caramelized Banana Tart with Coconut Ice Cream
— Patrick O’Connell, The Inn at Little Washington (Washington, Virginia)

Banana Tempura with Black Raspberry Ice Cream
— Kaz Okochi, Kaz Sushi Bistro (Washington, DC)

Macadamia Nut Tart with Banana-Rum Ice Cream
— Hiro Sone and Lissa Doumani, Terra (St. Helena, California)

Banana-Toffee Tart
— Sandy D’Amato, Sanford (Milwaukee)

Banana Tempura with Mango Ice Cream
— Sushi-Ko (Washington, DC)

Banana Crème Brûlée, Citrus-Pistachio Biscuit, Beurre Noisette Ice Cream, Peanut Caramel
— Michael Laiskonis, pastry chef, Le Bernardin (New York City)

Caramelized Banana, Smoked Chocolate Ice Cream, Stout
— Sam Mason, wd-50 (New York City)

Dover Sole with “Mostly Traditional Flavors” and Sliced Banana
— Grant Achatz, Alinea (Chicago)

crème fraîche
curries
custard
dates
desserts
figs, dried
ginger
guava
hazelnuts
honey
Kirsch
LEMON, JUICE
lemongrass
lime, juice
macadamia
mangoes: green, ripe
maple syrup
meringue
nutmeg
oats and oatmeal
oil, vegetable
orange
pancakes
papaya
parsley
passion fruit
A banana in a dessert is an instant sell. Everyone loves caramelized bananas!
— GINA DEPALMA, BABBO (NEW YORK CITY)

I hate overripe bananas. We’ll actually freeze whole, unpeeled bananas, which will continue to ripen in the freezer and turn black. When we want bananas to use as a puree, we’ll pull them out and let them thaw before pureeing, and then add them to a cake or mousse. The flavor is much better this way.
— DOMINIQUE DUBY, WILD SWEETS (VANCOUVER)

I serve a banana crème brûlée that is not made in ramekins (the usual individual serving cups) but cut out of a sheet pan and caramelized. I serve this set up in a grid with two squares of crème brûlée, one topped with a little citrus, the other with caramelized bananas — alternated with citrus biscuit, one topped with a brown butter ice cream, and the other with caramelized banana. So I have these three flavors — banana, citrus, and brown butter — tied together with a salted peanut–caramel sauce.
— MICHAEL LAISKONIS, LE BERNARDIN (NEW YORK CITY)

A banana’s ripeness will determine what you do with it. I like my bananas yellow and firm. If you are going to make a bananas Foster and your bananas are very yellow, you can cook them longer and they won’t fall apart or turn to mush. If you start with a banana that is pretty brown, the second you add heat, it falls apart. A brown banana gives me shivers!
— EMILY LUCHETTI, FARALLON (SAN FRANCISCO)

Flavor Affinities
banana + blackberries + cream
banana + brown butter + caramel + citrus + peanuts
banana + caramel + chocolate
banana + caramel + crème fraîche + lemongrass
banana + coconut + cream
banana + cream + honey + macadamia nuts + vanilla
banana + cream + mango
banana + dates + oatmeal
banana + honey + sesame seeds
banana + macadamia nuts + rum
banana + oats + pecans

BARLEY
Taste: sweet, astringent
Function: cooling
Techniques: simmer

beef
butter
garlic
lemon thyme
mirepoix (carrots, celery, onions)
mushrooms: cultivated, wild (e.g.,
    shiitakes)
olive oil
onions
oregano
parsley, flat-leaf
pepper, white
sage
salt, kosher
savory
scallions
soups
stocks: chicken, vegetable
thyme
tomatoes
vinegar, sherry

peanuts and peanut butter
pecans
pepper, black
pineapple
pistachios
pomegranate
puddings
raisins
raspberries: red, black
rice
RUM
salads, fruit
sesame seeds
smoothies and shakes
sour cream
strawberries
SUGAR: BROWN, WHITE
sweet potatoes
**BASIL** (See also Basil, Thai, and Lemon Basil)

**Season:** summer  
**Taste:** sweet  
**Weight:** light, soft-leaved  
**Volume:** mild–moderate  
**Tips:** Add just before serving. Use to add a note of freshness to a dish.

- apricots  
- Asian cuisine  
- beans: green, white  
- bell peppers, esp. red, roasted  
- berries  
- blueberries  
- breads  
- broccoli  
- Cambodian cuisine  
- capers  
- carrots  

**CHEESE:** feta, goat, MOZZARELLA, PARMESAN, PECORINO, RICOTTA  

- chicken  
- chile peppers  
- chives  
- chocolate, white  
- cilantro  
- cinnamon  
- coconut milk  
- corn  
- crab  
- cream and ice cream  
- cucumber  
- custards  
- duck  
- eggplant  

**EGGS AND EGG DISHES**  
(e.g., omelets)  

- fennel  
- fish, esp. grilled or poached  
- French cuisine  
- **GARLIC**  
- ginger, fresh  
- honey  

**ITALIAN CUISINE**  

- lamb  
- lemon, juice  
- lemon verbena  
- lime, juice  
- liver  
- marjoram  
- meats  
- Mediterranean cuisine  
- mint  
- mussels  
- mustard: powder, seeds  
- nectarines  
- OLIVE OIL  
- olives  
- onions  
- orange  
- oregano  
- Parmesan cheese  
- parsley, flat-leaf  

**PASTA DISHES AND SAUCES**

I use basil a lot. I will add it at the very end of cooking a dish, and it will totally change where the dish is going. Added at the last second, it gives a minty freshness that was not there before. Basil says “fresh” and “alive” to me. And although you can get it year-round, I associate it with summer.

I think particularly of fish and shellfish with basil. I cook a lobster with a sauce of sweet Muscat or Sauternes, curry, and lime. This is a dish that has been played with. The shells have been chopped up, added to mirepoix, and turned into sauce. Then there’s wine. So when the basil hits, you have this whole new thing going on. It opens up the dish and makes it light. It goes against the “worked-on” aspect of the dish.

In Thai cooking, you will find coconut milk–based curry that will have whole leaves of basil in it. Basil becomes something of a vegetable served this way.

— **DAVID WALTUCK,** CHANTERELLE (NEW YORK CITY)

I love basil in syrups. It works with strawberries and any citrus fruit. The trio I use the most for summer fruits like berries is basil, lemon, and vanilla. I have even macerated cherry tomatoes in this combination and made them into a fruit crisp.

— **MICHAEL LAISKONIS,** LE BERNARDIN (NEW YORK CITY)

I love basil. It is more familiar than cilantro, and more people like it. I use it in ceviche instead of cilantro because it is not as pungent. I combine hamachi tuna with tomato, watermelon, yuzu, and sesame seeds with fresh basil and basil oil.

— **KATSUYA FUKUSHIMA,** MINIBAR (WASHINGTON, DC)
I use this in lots of vegetarian dishes because it gives them some oomph. It also works well with meat dishes, from beef to carpaccio to venison. I make a Thai basil pesto but make a few adjustments to the recipe or else it can look bruised and take on a funky color. We will add a little pumpkin seed oil to keep it a deep, rich green.

— BRAD FARMERIE, PUBLIC (NEW YORK CITY)

ginger
lemon grass
noodles and noodle dishes
oils, esp. pumpkin seed
salads
seafood
soup, esp. Asian
Thai cuisine
vegetarian dishes
venison

**Flavor Affinities**
Thai basil + beef + pumpkin seed
oil
Thai basil + coconut milk +
ginger

---

**BASS** (See also Bass, Sea, and Bass, Striped)

**Weight:** light

**Volume:** quiet

**Techniques:** bake, broil, deep-fry, poach, roast, sauté, steam

artichoke
bay leaf
carrots
cayenne
celery
chervil
fennel
garlic
lemon
olive oil

**Black bass** is a fish that can go with the most exotic flavors. We serve black bass with Peking duck, green papaya salad, and a very light, thin chutney sauce. I love Peking duck and find the flavor very soft and not “duck-y” or aggressive.

— ERIC RIPERT, LE BERNARDIN (NEW YORK CITY)
In my black sea bass in a tamarind-ginger sauce with minted baby onions dish, the tamarind is acidic, and ginger is a nice flavor bridge. I put mint in the onions to cut their sweetness.
— GABRIEL KREUTHER, THE MODERN (NEW YORK CITY)

### Dishes

**Paupiette of Black Sea Bass in a Crisp Potato Shell, with Tender Leeks and Syrah Sauce**
— Daniel Boulud, Daniel (New York City)

**Sesame-Crust Chilean Sea Bass with Baby Shrimp, Clams, and Artichokes**
— Patrick O'Connell, The Inn at Little Washington (Washington, Virginia)

**Black Bass with Porcini Mushrooms, Braised Parsnips, and Chestnuts**
— David Pasternak, Esca (New York City)

**Grilled Pacific Sea Bass for Two with Marinated Blood Orange and Lime**
— David Pasternak, Esca (New York City)

**Crisp Black Sea Bass with Olive-Caper Emulsion**
— Alfred Portale, Gotham Bar and Grill (New York City)

**Spice-Crusted Black Sea Bass in Sweet and Sour Jus**
— Jean-Georges Vongerichten, Jean Georges (New York City)

---

**Flavor Affinities**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Black Bass + Chutney + Papaya</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>black bass + new potatoes +</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>shrimp</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**BASS, SEA**

**Season:** winter–spring

**Weight:** medium

**Volume:** quiet

---

**Techniques:** bake, broil, ceviche, deep-fry, grill, pan roast, poach, roast, sauté, steam

- almonds
- anchovies
- artichokes
- bacon
- basil
- bay leaf
- beans, esp. green or white
- beets
- bell peppers: red, green
- bread crumbs
- BUTTER: clarified, salted, unsalted
- capers
- cardamom
- carrots
- cayenne
- celery
- chervil
- chives
- cilantro
- citrus
- coriander
- corn
- cream
- crème fraîche
- fennel
- garlic, fresh
- ginger, fresh
- hazelnuts
- honey
- leeks
- lemon: juice, zest
- lemon, preserved
- lentils
- lime, juice
- marjoram
- mayonnaise
- mint
- mirin
- MUSHROOMS, esp. button, porcini, or shiitake
- mustard, Dijon
- new potatoes

---

**Ingredients:**

- endive
- fennel
- garlic
- ginger
- ham
- honey
- leeks
- lemon
- lemon, preserved
- lime
- marjoram
- mint
- mushrooms, porcini
- mustard
- olive oil
- onions
- orange, juice
- oregano
- papaya
- parsley, flat-leaf
- parsnips
- peas
- pepper, white
- raisins
- saffron
- salt, sea
- scallions
- scallops
- shallots
- shrimp
- squash: hubbard, yellow
- stock, chicken
- tarragon
- thyme
- tomatoes
- tuna
- turnips
- vinegar: champagne, red wine
- wine: red, white
- zucchini
**Flavor Affinities**

sea bass + artichokes + basil +
   chives + green beans + lemon +
   new potatoes

sea bass + bacon + corn + fava
   beans

sea bass + mushrooms + sesame
   seeds + shrimp

**Striped bass** is a hearty fish and is one of my favorites. I love roasting it
with the skin on to a crisp, and finishing it with butter, garlic, and
thyme. It's a fish that pairs well with meat, whether bacon,
sweetbreads, or braised pork.

— BRADFORD THOMPSON, MARY ELAINE'S AT THE PHOENICIAN (SCOTTSDALE, ARIZONA)

**Dishes**

Wild Carolina Coast Striped Bass “Riviera” with a Salad of Shaved Fennel, Arugula,
and Babaganoush, Cured Tomatoes, Spanish Olives, and Yellow Pepper Broth

— Carrie Nahabedian, Naha (Chicago)

Roasted Local Wild Striped Bass with Hubbard Squash, Caramelized Apple,
and Wild Mushrooms

— David Pasternak, Esca (New York City)

Poached Atlantic Striped Bass, Pasilla Chili, Cocoa, Duck Consommé

— Rick Tramonto, Tru (Chicago)
prosciutto  
rosemary  
sage  
**SALT: KOSHER, SEA**  
sauerkraut  
scallions  
sesame seeds  
shallots  
sour cream  
soy sauce  
squid  
squid ink  
stocks: fish, shellfish  
Tabasco sauce  
thyme, fresh  
tomatoes  
truffles, black  
**VINEGAR: champagne, red wine,**  
sherry, white wine  
walnuts  
**wine: port, dry white, Riesling**  
zucchini

**Flavor Affinities**

- striped bass + bacon + sauerkraut  
- striped bass + bok choy + fish sauce  
- striped bass + clam broth + marjoram + spinach  
- striped bass + curry + sour cream  
- striped bass + fennel + olives + tomatoes  
- striped bass + garlic + lemon + thyme  
- striped bass + leeks + lemon juice + Dijon mustard  
- striped bass + leeks + shiitake mushrooms

---

I am a little too fond of **bay leaf**. I use it a lot. I probably have a fondness for it because I associate it with so many childhood flavors, like pot roast. It has a hearty quality to it and I associate it with stocks and big flavors. I will use fresh or dried bay leaf. Fresh bay leaf has fresher flavor and is surprisingly more intense than dried bay leaf, but it’s still not as dramatic a difference as you can find with other herbs when it comes to fresh versus dried.

---

Inexperienced cooks will throw a handful of **bay leaves** into 40 gallons of veal stock. What happens next is they go to make a sauce and can’t figure out what to do about the medicinal taste. It’s the bay leaf! I’ll explain they only need two or three at the most.

---

**BAY LEAF**

**Taste:** sweet, bitter  
**Weight:** light, tough-leaved  
**Volume:** quiet–loud, depending on quantity used  
**Techniques:** can stand up to cooking (e.g., simmer, stew)

- allspice  
- apples  
- beans: dried, white  
- beef  
- braised dishes  
- caramel  
- cauliflower  
- celery leaf  
- cheese dishes  
- chestnuts  
- chicken  
- corn  
- cream and ice cream  
- custards  
- dates  
- desserts  
- duck  
- figs  
- fish  
- French cuisine  
- game  
- game birds  
- garlic  
- grains  
- juniper berries  
- lamb  
- lemon, juice  
- lentils  
- marinades  
- marjoram  
- **meats**  
- Mediterranean cuisine  
- mole sauce  
- Moroccan cuisine  
- onions  
- parsley  
- pâté  
- pears  
- pepper, black  
- polenta  
- pork  
- pot roast  
- potatoes  
- poultry  
- prunes  
- pumpkin  
- quail  
- rice (e.g., rice pudding) and **risotto**  
- rosemary  
- sage  
- salmon  
- sauces  
- sausage

---

**The Flavor Bible**

62
savorysteak, shrimp
SOUPS
spinach
squash: summer, winter
STEWs
STOCKS AND BROTHS
strawberries
swordfish
thyme
tomatoes and tomato sauces
tuna
turkey
Turkish cuisine
vanilla
veal
venison
vinegar

BEANS — IN GENERAL
(See also specific beans below)
carrots
celery
garlic
lemon
marjoram
mint
onions
PARSLEY
rosemary
sage
salt
*SAVORY
thyme
vinegar

BEANS, BLACK
Weight: medium–heavy
Volume: moderate
Techniques: simmer

allspice
apples
avocado
bacon
bay leaf
beer
bell peppers: green, red
butter

Flavors

Dishes
Black Bean Soup Flavored with Grilled Wild Ramps, Avocado Leaf, and Cilantro,
Studded with Sweet Roasted Chayote and Corn, Topped with Green Chile Salsa and
Crispy Tortilla Strips
— Rick Bayless, Frontera Grill (Chicago)

Black Bean Tamales Filled with Homemade Goat Cheese in “Guisado” of Wild and
Woodland Mushrooms, Organic Roasted Tomatoes, Green Chile, and Mint; Watercress
Salad
— Rick Bayless, Frontera Grill (Chicago)

Black Beans Fried with Garlic, Onion, and Epazote, Topped with Mexican Fresh Cheese
— Rick Bayless, Frontera Grill (Chicago)

Caribbean cuisine
Cilantro
parsley, flat-leaf
pepper: black, white
red pepper flakes
rice
rosemary
salsa
SALT, ESP. KOSHER
salt pork
sausage
SAVORY
scallions
shallots
sherry
shrimp
soups
SOUR CREAM
South American cuisine
Southwestern cuisine
spinach
STOCKS: BEEF, CHICKEN, VEGETABLE
sugar: brown, white
Tabasco sauce
thyme
tomatoes and tomato paste
vinegar: cider, red wine, sherry, white wine
wine: Madeira, sherry
yogurt

Flavor Affinities
black beans + cumin + green bell peppers + oregano
black beans + lemon + sherry
BEANS, BROAD (See Beans, Fava)

BEANS, BUTTER (See Beans, Lima)

BEANS, CANELLINI
(See also Beans, White)
**Weight:** medium
**Volume:** quiet–moderate
**Techniques:** braise, puree, simmer

bacon
carrots
celery
clams
garlic
Italian cuisine
lamb
lemon
olive oil

onions, esp. Spanish paprika, sweet
PARSLEY, FLAT-LEAF
pepper, black
saffron
salads
salt, kosher
sausages (e.g., chorizo)
SAVORY
soups
stock, chicken
tarragon
thyme
tomatoes, esp. plum

**BEANS, FAVA** (aka Broad Beans or Horse Beans)

**Season:** spring–summer
**Taste:** bitter
**Weight:** light–medium
**Volume:** moderate
**Techniques:** boil, puree, simmer

Asian cuisine
bacon
basil
butter, unsalted
CHEESE: dry feta, manchego,
Parmesan, pecorino, ricotta,
sheep’s milk
chile peppers
chives, fresh
cilantro
corn
cream
cumin
curry
dill
duck
falafel (key ingredient)
fennel
fish (e.g., salmon)
garlic
gnocchi
greens, bitter
ham
herbs
Italian cuisine
lamb
leeks
lemon, juice
lentils
lobster
Mediterranean cuisine
Mexican cuisine
Middle Eastern cuisine
mint (e.g., Italian cuisine)
Moroccan cuisine
OIL, walnut
OLIVE OIL
onions, esp. spring
orange, zest
oregano
PARSLEY, FLAT-LEAF
pasta
peas
pepper, black
poultry (e.g., turkey)
prosciutto
rabbit
radishes

**Dishes**

Cannellini Bean Soup with Smoked Trout Croquette and Pumpkin Seed Oil
— Gabriel Kreuther, The Modern (New York City)
Fava beans have a great flavor. Cooks in the past would blanch them, and the flavor would be left in the water. Today, what I like to do with fava and other vegetables is to put them in a pan with a little water, olive oil, or butter, and to cover them while they cook. That way, all the flavor stays in the vegetables. If I could cook for my customers the way I like to cook and eat at home, I would sweat some spring onions in a pan with butter or oil, covered, to keep in the flavor. Then I'd add the shucked fava beans and let them cook with a little water. At the last second, I'd toss in some chopped parsley or basil, and there's your sauce. This would be great under some fish. If you added some thyme and maybe a little lamb jus, it would also work with lamb.

— TRACI DES JARDINS, JARDINIERE (SAN FRANCISCO)

Fava beans have a very delicate flavor, I like them raw and tender by themselves — or combined with sheep's milk cheese and olive oil. However, I wouldn't use an olive oil that's too peppery or spicy, because it would overwhelm them.

— TONY LIU, AUGUST (NEW YORK CITY)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>BEANS, FLAGEOLET</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Weight:</strong> light-medium</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Volume:</strong> quiet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Techniques:</strong> simmer</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- apples
- arugula
- basil
- bay leaf
- butter
- carrots
- cassoulet
- celery
- cheese, esp. manchego or pecorino
- chicken
- cream
- fines herbes
- fish (e.g., cod)
- French cuisine, esp. Provençal

**Flavor Affinities**
- flageolet beans + garlic + thyme

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>BEANS, GARBANZO</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(See Chickpeas)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>BEANS, GREEN</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Season:</strong> summer–autumn</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Weight:</strong> light–medium</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Volume:</strong> moderate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Techniques:</strong> boil, grill, sauté, steam, stir-fry</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- almonds
- anchovies
- bacon
- BASIL

**Flavor Affinities**
- fava beans + garlic + olive oil + rosemary
- fava beans + lamb + thyme
- fava beans + olive oil + pecorino cheese + prosciutto
- fava beans + olive oil + thyme
- fava beans + sheep's milk cheese + olive oil

**Dishes**
- Pasta with Basil Pesto, Green Beans, and Potatoe
  — Lidia Bastianich, Felidia (New York City)
BEANS, GREEN

bay leaf
beans, shell
bell pepper, red
bread crumbs
butter, unsalted
capers
carrots
cayenne
CHEESE: Asiago, blue, feta, goat,

PARMESAN
chervil
chickpeas
chile peppers
chives
cilantro
coconut
corn
cream
crème fraîche
cumin
curry leaves
dill
eggs, esp. hard-boiled
fennel
French cuisine
garlic
ginger, fresh
ham (e.g., Serrano)
lemon, juice
lemon balm
lime, juice
lovage
marjoram
Mediterranean cuisine
mint
mushrooms
mustard, Dijon
mustard seeds, black
nuts
OIL: peanut, sesame
OLIVE OIL
olives: black, niçoise
ONIONS, esp. green, pearl, or red
oregano
pancetta
paprika: smoked, sweet
PARSLEY
peanuts
pepper: black, white
Pernod
pork
potatoes
prosciutto
red pepper flakes
rosemary
sage
salt, kosher
SAVORY, SUMMER
shallots
shrimp
soy sauce
stock, chicken
sugar
tamari
tarragon
thyme
TOMATOES
vinaigrettes
VINEGAR: red wine, rice wine,

sherry, tarragon, white wine
walnuts
yogurt

Flavor Affinities

green beans + anchovies + garlic +

Parmesan cheese + walnuts
green beans + mustard + prosciutto +

vinaigrette + walnuts

BEANS, LIMA
Season: summer
Taste: bitter
Weight: medium
Volume: moderate
Techniques: simmer, steam

BEANS, KIDNEY
Taste: sweet-astringent
Function: cooling
Weight: medium
Volume: moderate
Techniques: boil, simmer

bacon
bay leaf
bell pepper, esp. red
cardamom
carrots
cayenne
chile peppers: dried red, fresh
green
chili
chorizo
cinnamon
cloves
coriander
cumin
curry leaves
garam masala
garlic
ginger
Indian cuisine
Italian cuisine, esp. Tuscan
olive oil
onions, esp. red, sweet, white
PARSLEY
pepper, black
pork
potatoes
saffron
salt
sauerkraut
SAVORY
thyme
tomatoes
turmeric
wine, red
BEANS, NAVY
Weight: medium
Volume: moderate
Techniques: simmer

bacon
baked beans
basil
bay leaf
cayenne
cheese: Parmesan, ricotta
chili powder
garlic
ketchup
molasses
mustard: Dijon, yellow
olive oil
ONIONS, ESP. YELLOW
PARSLEY
pasta
pepper

BEANS, PINTO
Season: winter
Weight: medium
Volume: moderate
Techniques: refry, simmer

bacon
cheese: feta, queso fresco
chile peppers: chipotle, jalapeño, poblano, serrano
chili
cilantro
cumin
epazote
garlic
Mexican cuisine, esp. northern
mint
oil: safflower, vegetable
onions, white
oregano, dried
paprika
PARSLEY
pork
refried beans (key ingredient)
SALT
SAVORY
scallions
sour cream
Southwestern cuisine
tequila
tomatoes

BEANS, RED
Season: winter
Weight: medium
Volume: moderate
Techniques: simmer

bell peppers, esp. green
chile peppers
chili (key ingredient)
chorizo
garlic
Mexican cuisine
olive oil
onions
PARSLEY
pork
sausage
SAVORY
Southwestern cuisine
stews

BEANS, WHITE
(e.g., Cannellini, Navy)
Season: winter
Weight: medium
Volume: moderate

ale or beer, dark
ancho chili powder
apricots, dried
arugula
bacon
basil
bay leaf
bouquet garni
bourbon
broccoli rabe

Dishes
A Latin Cassoulet of White Beans, Sausages, Smoked Bacon, and Kale Braised Slowly in
the Wood-Burning Oven, with Spicy Sauce and Rice
— Maricel Presilla, Cucharamama (Hoboken, New Jersey)

Soup: White Bean Puree with Rosemary Oil
— Judy Rodgers, Zuni Café (San Francisco)
butter, unsalted
carrots
celery
cheese: manchego, Parmesan, Pecorino Romano
chile peppers, dried
chives
cloves
cream
fennel
GARLIC
ginger, ground
Italian cuisine
ham
lamb
lemon, juice
maple syrup
mirepoix (carrots, celery, onions)
molasses
mushrooms, wild
mustard, dry
OIL, peanut
OLIVE OIL
ONIONS (e.g., cipollini, red, sweet)
PARSLEY, FLAT-LEAF
pasta
PEPPER: black, white
pork
prosciutto
red pepper flakes
rosemary
rum, dark
sage
SALT: KOSHER, SEA
SAVORY
shallots
soups
squash, winter
stocks: chicken, vegetable
sugar, brown
tarragon
thyme
tomatoes and tomato paste
truffles
vinegar: balsamic, cider, red wine
wine, dry white

Flavor Affinities
white beans + olive oil + pecorino cheese
white beans + olive oil + rosemary + balsamic vinegar
white beans + broccoli rabe + wild mushrooms

BEEF — IN GENERAL
Taste: sweet
Function: heating
Weight: medium-heavy
Volume: moderate
Techniques: See also individual cuts of beef.
Tips: Clove adds richness to beef.

allspice
bacon
basil
bay leaf
beans, green
béarnaise sauce
beer
bouquet garni
brandy
butter, unsalted
capers
carrots
cayenne
celery
cheese, blue (e.g., Cabrales)
chiles, esp. dried and pasilla
chives
chomos: Crispy, Crunchy Shredded Montana Natural Beef with Crispy White Onion

Dishes
“Brasato al Barolo” Braised Beef with Porcini Mushrooms
— Mario Batali, Babbo (New York City)

Mochomos: Crispy, Crunchy Shredded Montana Natural Beef with Crispy White Onion

Strings, Guacamole, Spicy Chile Salsa, and Warm Tortillas for Making Soft Tacos
— Rick Bayless, Topolobampo (Chicago)

Balsamic-Caramel Beef Cubes with Sticky Rice and Toasted Coconut
— Monica Pope, T’afia (Houston)

Chateaubriand, Wild Mushrooms, Porcini-Flavored Diced Yukon Gold Potatoes, Syrah Sauce
— Michel Richard, Citronelle (Washington, DC)

Ground Beef with Cream and Fenugreek on Yucca
— Vikram Vij and Meeru Dhalwala, Vij’s (Vancouver)
I love blue cheese with beef. We make a dish with blue cheese sauce that has chicken stock, Dijon mustard, truffle juice, and fresh truffle. This is a sauce that has many layers of flavor. The mustard is barely there but adds much more flavor to the sauce than vinegar or lemon would. The sauce is served on a beef filet that has been poached in spiced red wine. The poaching liquid is made with Cabernet Sauvignon that has been reduced for 25 minutes to concentrate its flavor. Juniper berries, pepper, star anise, fennel seeds, and cloves. The cooked tannin in the wine really brings up the meaty flavor of the beef.

— GABRIEL KREUTHER, THE MODERN (NEW YORK CITY)

All cuts of beef have a different flavor profile: There is the big beefy flavor of the strip steak, the luxurious tenderness of filet mignon, and the juicy, fatty mouthfeel of a great rib eye. Skirt steak is a juicy cut that is great served as an open-faced sandwich. Hanger steak has an offal quality to it and is different from all the others. Braised short ribs pick up all of the flavors of what they are cooked with, developing layers of deep, dark beef flavor after being cooked on the bone for hours.

— MICHAEL LOMONACO, PORTER HOUSE NEW YORK (NEW YORK CITY)

We make a wood-grilled 18-ounce “prime” rib eye of beef with a gratin of macaroni and goat cheese, glazed shallots, oxtail red wine sauce, and fleur de sel. This dish is meat on meat on meat! We have the steak, oxtail sauce, and shallots braised in veal stock. This dish has so much flavor. You have the richness and fattiness of the rib eye, and we grill it over a wood fire that takes it to a whole other place. Top it with a drizzle of olive oil, the fleur de sel, cracked pepper, and then add rich oxtail sauce to it. People go crazy for it.

— CARRIE NAHABEDIAN, NAHA (CHICAGO)

Flavor Affinities

beef + beer + onions
beef + garlic + ginger
beef + garlic + tomatoes
beef + mushrooms + potatoes
beef + mushrooms + red wine

BEEF — BRISKET

Techniques: barbecue, braise, corn, roast, simmer, smoke

barbecue rub
barbecue sauce
bay leaf
beer
cabbage, with corned beef brisket
chili powder
cinnamon
cumin
fennel seeds
garlic
horseradish
maple syrup
mirepoix
mustard
olive oil
onions
pasilla peppers
pepper, black

You can braise brisket for hours, and it still tastes like brisket, making it ideal to prepare for large parties. Nothing is better than what the Texans do with brisket, and that is barbecue. I also noticed that Texans get the fattiest brisket I have ever seen, so the fat just melts away and the meat is self-basting. My favorite barbecued brisket is from Mueller’s outside of Austin. He cooks it about twenty hours and then wraps it in brown butcher paper to let it rest — which I think is the key to his barbecue.

— MICHAEL LOMONACO, PORTER HOUSE NEW YORK (NEW YORK CITY)
BEEF — BRISKET (CONT.)

- potatoes
- rosemary
- salt
- soups
- star anise
- stews
- stock, beef
- sugar, brown
- thyme
- tomatoes and tomato paste
- vinegar: sherry, wine
- wine, red

BEEF — CHEEKS
Techniques: braise

- apples
- bay leaf
- butter, unsalted
- carrots
- celery
- celery root
- chives
- cinnamon
- cloves
- garlic
- horseradish
- leeks
- mustard
- oil, peanut
- onions
- pasta (e.g., gnocchi, ravioli)
- pepper, black
- potatoes, esp. mashed and/or new
- risotto
- rosemary
- salt, kosher
- stock, chicken
- tarragon
- thyme, fresh
- tomatoes
- vegetables, root
- vinegar, balsamic
- wine, red (e.g., Burgundy)

Dishes
Kobe Beef, Sauteed Foie Gras, Shaved Black Truffle, Madeira Sauce on an Onion Bun
— Hubert Keller, Burger Bar (Las Vegas)

Kobe Beef Carpaccio, Shaved Parmesan, Arugula, and Horseradish Sauce
— Frank Stitt, Highlands Bar and Grill (Birmingham, Alabama)

BEEF — KOBE
arugula
cheese, Parmesan
chives
garlic
ginger
horseradish
Japanese cuisine
Madeira
mushrooms
oil, sesame
olive oil
onions
pepper, black
salt, sea
sesame seeds
soy sauce
truffles, black
yuzu juice

BEEF — LOIN (aka shell, sirloin, tenderloin)
Techniques: pan roast, roast

- butter, unsalted
- five-spice powder
- ginger
- oil, peanut
- paprika
- pepper: black, white
- rosemary, fresh
- salt: kosher, sea
- sauces
- soy sauce
- thyme, fresh
- wasabi

Dishes
Cream of Sweet Onion, Braised Beef Oxtail, Aged Parmesan Tuile
— Jean Joho, Everest (Chicago)

BEEF — OXTAILS
Techniques: braise, stew

- allspice
- anise
- basil
- bay leaf
- beans, esp. white
- beer
- bell peppers
- cheese: Asiago, pecorino
- garlic
- ginger
- gnocchi
- leeks
- Madeira
- mushrooms
- mustard
- olive oil
- ONIONS
- orange
- parsley, flat-leaf
- parsnips
- pasta (e.g., ravioli, tortellini)
- pepper, black
- potatoes, esp. mashed
- risotto
- salt
- scallops
- shallots
- soups
- stews
- stocks: beef, chicken
- thyme
- tomatoes and tomato sauce
- WINE, RED
- wine, white
**Flavor Affinities**

- ox tails + parsnips + red wine
- ox tails + red wine + thyme + tomatoes

---

**BEEF — RIBS**

**Techniques:** barbecue, braise, (dry) roast

- barbecue sauce
- spice rub

---

**BEEF — ROAST**

**Techniques:** roast

- brandy
- chocolate
- coffee
- garlic
- horseradish
- mushrooms, wild
- rosemary
- sauces: béarnaise, red wine (esp. Madeira or port)
- soy sauce
- thyme
- wine, red

---

**BEEF — ROUND**

**Techniques:** grill, sauté, stir-fry

- bell peppers: red, green
- chili powder
- cilantro
- cumin
- garlic
- lime, juice
- olive oil
- onions, red
- parsley
- radishes
- Tabasco sauce

---

**BEEF — SHANK**

**Techniques:** braise

- garlic
- ginger

---

**BEEF — SHORT LOIN**

**Techniques:** roast

- brunchy
- chocolate
- coffee
- garlic
- horseradish
- mushrooms, wild
- rosemary
- sauces: béarnaise, red wine (esp. Madeira or port)
- soy sauce
- thyme
- wine, red

---

**BEEF — SHORT RIBS**

**Techniques:** barbecue, braise, stew

- bacon
- basil
- bay leaf
- beer or ale
- butter, unsalted
- carrots
- celery: stalk, leaves
- celery root
- chervil
- chile peppers, esp. hot cherry
- chives
- cilantro
- cinnamon
- coriander
- garam masala (Indian cuisine)
- GARLIC
- ginger
- gremolata
- grits
- horseradish
- leeks
- lemon: juice, zest
- lime
- mirepoix
- mushrooms: porcini, wild
- mustard: Dijon, Meaux
- molasses
- OIL: canola, corn, grapeseed, hazelnut, peanut, sesame, olive oil
- ONIONS, esp. green, pearl, white, or yellow
- orange: juice, zest
- oregano
- parsley, flat-leaf
- parsnips
- peas

---

**Vikram Vij of Vancouver’s Vij’s on Beef Short Ribs in Cinnamon**

For braising, I prefer to use cinnamon bark. Cinnamon stick is pretty, but it is steamed and rolled and a little too manipulated. In this dish, cinnamon bark is big and intense and not needed for presentation. At the end of the braise, you pull it out and throw it away. This dish is cooked for four hours and the cinnamon flavor does not cook out. In the end, the cinnamon imparts a delicate, sweet, aromatic flavor. It adds contrast to the chile flavor from the curry. If this dish ever has too much cinnamon flavor, you can counterbalance it with rice or yogurt that has a little salt and pepper in it.

---

— Vikram Vij, Vij’s (Vancouver)
PEPPER: black, Szechuan, white potatoes, esp. mashed prosciutto rosemary sage salt, kosher savory shallots sherry, dry soy sauce star anise STOCK: BEEF, CHICKEN, VEAL sugar: brown, white (pinch) tamarind tarragon THYME, FRESH tomatoes, tomato paste, and tomato sauce turnips (accompaniment) vinegar: balsamic, sherry WINE, DRY RED (e.g., Barolo, Cabernet Sauvignon, Merlot, Zinfandel) wine, white, esp. fruity Worcestershire sauce

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dishes</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Short Ribs with Braised Boston Lettuce, Peppered Shallot Confit</td>
<td>— Daniel Boulud, Daniel (New York City)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Braised Short Ribs with Parsnip Puree, Porcini Mushrooms, and Barolo</td>
<td>— Scott Bryan, Veritas (New York City)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Slow-Roasted Short Ribs with Stone-Ground Grits</td>
<td>— Cesare Casella, Maremmana (New York City)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Garlic Braised Short Ribs with Parsnip Puree, Baby Round Carrots in</td>
<td>— Bob Kinkead, Colvin Run (Vienna, Virginia)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carrot Butter, Haricots Verts, and Cabernet Sauce</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Braised Short Ribs of Beef with Soft Grits and Meaux Mustard Sauce</td>
<td>— Gray Kunz, Cafe Gray (New York City)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Braised Short Ribs of Beef, Wild Boar Bacon, and Cauliflower Puree</td>
<td>— Carrie Nahabedian, Naha (Chicago)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>with Roasted Winter Root Vegetables and Cipollini Onions,</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Smoked “Manuka” Sea Salt, and Herb Salad</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Short Ribs Braised and Then Caramelized on the Grill with Ginger and</td>
<td>— Kaz Okochi, Kaz Sushi Bistro (Washington, DC)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Soy</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Braised Short Ribs in Red Wine Sauce, Brown Loaf Sugar and Mustard</td>
<td>— Maricel Presilla, Cucharamama (Hoboken, New Jersey)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Crust, Stir-Fried Quinoa and Swiss Chard</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beef Short Ribs in Cinnamon and Red Wine Curry</td>
<td>— Vikram Vij and Meeru Dhalwala, Vij’s (Vancouver)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Short ribs are a luxurious cut of meat, because they are braised for three to three and a half hours. We don't braise our ribs in red wine, but in Yuengling Porter, which has ethereal chocolate notes in the aroma. In the sauce with the beer is mirepoix, a sachet of herbs, lots of peppercorns, and chiles. I went to a charity event where they served short ribs for six hundred guests, and one reason it worked is because it is a cut that allows for a great margin of error. You cook it until it is well done and falling-off-the-bone tender. Falling-off-the-bone tender is one of the appeals of a braised dish. It is sensual. Get yourself a glass of good spicy Syrah with that short rib dish and think great thoughts! — MICHAEL LOMONACO, PORTER HOUSE NEW YORK (NEW YORK CITY)
Flavor Affinities
short ribs + bay leaf + beer + mushrooms + mustard
short ribs + beer + garlic + horseradish + onions + potatoes + tomatoes
short ribs + carrots + mushrooms + parsnips
short ribs + celery root + horseradish
short ribs + cinnamon + tomatoes + red wine
short ribs + horseradish + lemon + parsley
short ribs + onions + potatoes + red wine
short ribs + potatoes + root vegetables

BEEF — STEAK: IN GENERAL
Techniques: broil, grill, sauté

aligot (French garlic-cheesy pureed potatoes)
allspice
arugula
basil
bay leaf
béarnaise sauce
brandy
butter, unsalted
capers
cayenne
celery root
chard
cheese, Parmesan
chile peppers
chives
cilantro
cloves
cognac
coriander
cream
cumin
d five-spice powder
fish sauce, Thai garlic

ginger, fresh
herbs, esp. herbes de Provence
honey
horseradish
juniper berries
lemon: juice, zest
lemon grass
lime, juice
marrow
mushrooms (e.g., chanterelles, cremini, shiitake)
mustard, Dijon
oil: canola, grapeseed, sesame, vegetable
olive oil
onions: red, white
parsley, flat-leaf
PEPPER: black, green, pink, Szechuan, white
port
potatoes, French fries
red pepper flakes
rice
rosemary
salt, kosher
scallions
shallots
sherry, dry
soy sauce

I like to keep it simple and serve steak au poivre with a peppercorn crust and deglazed with bourbon or even good ole American rye, which has more flavor. I also like steak with a margarita sauce, which is a good, zingy sauce made with tequila, orange, and lemon zest, and finished with roasted chile peppers.

— MICHAEL LOMONACO, PORTER HOUSE NEW YORK (NEW YORK CITY)

Flavor Affinities
steak + arugula + Parmesan cheese + balsamic vinegar
steak + bacon + potatoes + red wine
steak + Chianti + lemon + salt
steak + cremini mushrooms + watercress
steak + horseradish + mustard + potatoes
steak + shallots + red wine

BEEF — STEAK: CHUCK
Techniques: braise, grill, stew

This cut is really beefy, flavorful, and fatty, but tough. Chuck steak can be grilled, but it also works well for braising. A chuck also makes a good cut for stew because it has nice fat. When I was growing up, a "steak Episole" was chuck steak that had good fat, was seared well, and then cooked slowly with tomatoes, onions, and fresh oregano. You may not see chuck steak a lot on menus, but you see it a lot in burgers. In fact, this is my favorite meat for a burger. I like my mix to be 75 to 80 percent lean and 20 to 25 percent fat.

— MICHAEL LOMONACO, PORTER HOUSE NEW YORK (NEW YORK CITY)
### BEEF — STEAK: FILET MIGNON (aka Beef Tenderloin)

**Techniques:** broil, grill, sauté

- bacon
- butter, unsalted
- cognac
- cream
- foie gras
- garlic
- leeks
- mushrooms, esp. morels, porcini
- oil, peanut
- olive oil
- onions
- pepper: black, green
- port
- potatoes
- rosemary
- salt
- shallots
- sherry
- stocks: beef, mushroom, veal
- thyme
- vinegar, balsamic
- wine: dry red, Madeira

---

### BEEF — STEAK: FLANK

**Techniques:** broil, grill, sauté, stir-fry

- chile peppers, esp. chipotle or jalapeño
- cilantro
- cumin
- garlic
- hoisin sauce
- honey
- lime, juice
- molasses
- mustard, brown
- oil: peanut, sesame
- olive oil
- oregano
- salsa, esp. tomato
- salt
- soy sauce

---

**Filet mignon** gets no respect from many chefs because it doesn’t have much beef flavor, but it is still the most popular cut in restaurants. I like to sear it and pan roast it with a little olive oil or an olive oil and butter combination. It is not a well-used muscle on the inside of the short loin, so filet is always tender. On the other side of the bone from the more worked side of the strip steak is the tail end of the filet. Béarnaise sauce [i.e., vinegar, shallots, egg yolks, butter, etc.] is a classic accompaniment to filet mignon.

— MICHAEL LOMONACO, PORTER HOUSE NEW YORK (NEW YORK CITY)

---

**Dishes**

**Seared Rib Eye, Caramelized Yukon Gold Potatoes, and Chanterelles**

— Daniel Boulud, Daniel (New York City)

**Strip Loin Poached in Butter and Roasted with Sea Salt, Short Ribs Stuffed in Cremini Mushrooms with Potato Boulangeré, Spinach Puree, and Foie Gras Hollandaise**

— Jeffrey Buben, Vidalia (Washington, DC)

**Dry-Aged New York Steak with Slow-Cooked Broccoli, Garlic, and Lemon, Fingerling Potatoes, Niçoise Olive Jus**

— Traci Des Jardins, Jardinière (San Francisco)

**Skirt Steak Marinated in Seville Oranges and Lime Juice**

— Marcel Presilla, Zafra (Hoboken, New Jersey)

**Strawberry Mountain New York Strip, Grilled Lettuce, Olive Oil-Poached Tomato, and Lemon Cream**

— Cory Schreiber, Wildwood (Portland, Oregon)

**Cast Iron-Seared Porcini-Crusted New York Sirloin Steak, Roasted Garlic Mash Potatoes, Black Trumpet Ragout, Braised Kale, Rum au Poivre**

— Allen Susser, Chef Allen’s (Aventura, Florida)

---

**Dishes**

**Grilled Filet Mignon, Crisp Potatoes, Spinach, and Roasted Garlic Custard**

— Alfred Portale, Gotham Bar and Grill (New York City)

**Tournedos of Beef Tenderloin Worthy of a Splurge: Twin Filets of Beef Tenderloin Set on Brioche Toast, Slathered with Foie Gras Butter, and Served with Truffle Sauce, Port-Braised Cipollini Onions, Fingerling Potatoes, Spring Mushrooms, and Leek Puree**

— Janos Wilder, Janos (Tucson)

---

- sugar
- thyme
- vinegar, balsamic
Miso-marinated grilled steak will help to release the flavors of everything else you pair with it. Use red miso alone, or in combination with garlic, ginger, mirin [sweet rice wine], sesame oil, soy sauce, and/or sugar.
— HIRO SONE, TERRA (ST. HELENA, CALIFORNIA)

**BEEF — STEAK: HANGER**

**Techniques:** broil, grill, sauté

bell peppers
brandy
celery root
ginger
mushrooms
mustard
onions
parsnips
pepper, black
salsa verde
scallions
soy sauce
thyme
wine, red

garlic
mushrooms, porcini (dried)
olive oil
oregano
pepper, black
red pepper flakes
rosemary
vinegar: balsamic, red wine

**BEEF — STEAK: RIB EYE**

**Techniques:** broil, grill, sauté, stir-fry

bell peppers
brandy
celery root
ginger
mushrooms
mustard
onions
parsnips
pepper, black
salsa verde
scallions
soy sauce
thyme
wine, red

garlic
mushrooms, porcini (dried)
olive oil
oregano
pepper, black
red pepper flakes
rosemary
vinegar: balsamic, red wine

**BEEF — STEAK: SKIRT**

**Techniques:** broil, grill, sauté

allspice
anchovies

**BEEF — STEAK TARTARE**

We make tartare from filet mignon and hand-chop it to order, which I like so that I don’t feel like I’m just eating ground beef. I season our tartare with mustard, capers, and anchovies, which I am not shy about. You want the texture of the beef to be a counterpoint.
— MICHAEL LOMONACO, PORTER HOUSE NEW YORK (NEW YORK CITY)

**Skirt steak** comes in a long strip and looks like a belt — it’s about two feet long and a couple of inches wide. This is an incredibly flavorful cut and delicious. It is very reasonably priced as well. It is very popular in the Latin community, especially with Argentinians. You often see it flattened with a mallet to tenderize it [by breaking the meat fibers] and used in fajitas. This, along with the hanger steak, is the beefiest flavored cut of beef. We serve it in a chimichurri sauce, which is a classic Argentinian sauce made of chopped garlic, onion, and parsley, plus white [we use champagne] vinegar, red pepper flakes, and a little olive oil. It grills really well.
— MICHAEL LOMONACO, PORTER HOUSE NEW YORK (NEW YORK CITY)
**Michael Lomonaco**
**of Porter House New York**
**on Cooking Steak**

**Aging:** Aging is important because it tenderizes the steak. The aging process breaks down the fibers and dehydrates the steak, concentrating its flavor. A dry-aged steak has a more mineral and sharp edge to it, versus fresh meat that tastes sweeter. It is critical to the flavor and adds to the cost because it takes four weeks of aging to achieve it.

**Seasoning:** All our steaks are seasoned with coarse kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper just prior to cooking, which draws out the flavor while they cook. A squeeze of lemon makes a good Tuscan steak taste even better. If you are in Italy and eating “bistecca Fiorentina,” what you are having is an Italian porterhouse.

The steak is grilled over dried grape vines and served with a drizzle of green olive oil from the first pressing of the new harvest and lemons on the side.

**Cooking:** A steak should be cooked rare to medium rare. "Rare" is a little cool inside and hot on the exterior. "Medium rare" is just a shade past, and only warm in the middle. Cooking a steak beyond that point, it starts to toughen up and the fat oozes out, making it increasingly dry and tough.

**Saucing:** Part of looking forward is looking back. Sauces provide the connection to historical French and Italian cooking. In the gastronomic world, the saucier was the top cook in the kitchen. It is all about building layer upon layer of complexity in a sauce. It is most often sweet and sour, to cut through the richness of the fat of the steak. Red wine sauce has the acidity to cut richness, with sweetness from caramelized shallots, and it enhances the beef flavor. We also make a homemade barbecue sauce as our steak sauce, which is sweet from light brown sugar and molasses, tart from red wine vinegar, and smoky from chipotle peppers.

**Hanger steak** is known as an onglet in French and is found on bistro menus. It is also a great value, which is why you see it on menus in smaller restaurants. A hanger steak is incredibly flavorful. There is only one per carcass, and it comes from the area close to the kidneys, so it has almost an offal flavor to the beef. It has become popular because it is different and not a typical-tasting steak. I like a hanger steak grilled and served rare to medium rare. Slicing is also important, because you have to cut it on the bias so that it is tender. I like a hanger steak served with a traditional sauce, such as a caramelized shallot and red wine sauce or a bourbon peppercorn sauce. It is important to caramelize the shallots so they get sweet and offset the gaminess of the steak. I use bourbon instead of cognac because it has more punch to it, and I’ll use four different peppercorns — white, black, pink, and green — with the last two modulating the flavor. Green peppercorns have the sharpness to cut through the richness.

— MICHAEL LOMONACO, PORTER HOUSE NEW YORK (NEW YORK CITY)

**Rib steak** is the most popular cut next to filet mignon. The cut comes from the rib roast, where one end meets the chuck at the fattier end and the other meets the short loin at the leaner end. The rib steak that meets the chuck end is the most popular and can even have a big knot of fat in it. This is one of my favorite steaks. A big, fatty, juicy rib steak can’t be beat on the grill. I cook these bone-on because it gives more beef flavor. We do a Brandt Ranch cut that comes from California just north of Mexico. That area has lots of flavor influences, so I choose to do a chili rub on the steak. The cut is Holstein, which has a sweeter edge to its meat. We grill it so that fat melts away and bastes it as it cooks. At the end, we brush it with a blend of ancho chili, light brown sugar, toasted ground cumin seeds, chipotle chile, and a pinch of cayenne. Then we char it one more time, so that is like reseasoning the meat.

— MICHAEL LOMONACO, PORTER HOUSE NEW YORK (NEW YORK CITY)

The **sirloin** is a good, beefy-flavored high-quality cut. It is a cut toward the back of the animal that gets more work, so it is a little chewy, but it is a good-quality steak for barbecuing. If this cut is quickly cooked over high heat on a grill, not overcooked, and sliced correctly on the bias, you are going to get the most out of it.

— MICHAEL LOMONACO, PORTER HOUSE NEW YORK (NEW YORK CITY)

When you see rare roast beef, it is **top round.** It is a little tough, and that is why you see roast beef always sliced so thin. Nothing beats top round for a good old-fashioned roast beef sandwich because it doesn’t have any gristle or fat — just good, beefy flavor.

— MICHAEL LOMONACO, PORTER HOUSE NEW YORK (NEW YORK CITY)
When I was in Ireland, I swilled Guinness [stout] and ate bangers and mash, which was essentially sausage with caramelized onions on top. It was so good that when I came back to the U.S., I started experimenting with Guinness. That's how I came up with a dish of braised short ribs that had been marinated in Guinness. The problem you often have cooking with beer is that sometimes the dish gets bitter. So, to counteract that naturally without using sugar, I choose to use onions. I marinate the ribs in the beer, then braise them, and finish the dish with a puree of roasted onions for balance.

— ANDREW CARMELLINI, A VOCE (NEW YORK CITY)

**BEER**

**Taste:** varies, from bitter to sweet  
**Weight:** medium–heavy  
**Volume:** quiet–loud

- beef  
- cheese, cheddar  
- ham  
- marinades  
- meats  
- onions  
- pork  
- sauerkraut  
- sausages  
- shrimp  
- stews

**CHEESE:** blue, cambozola, cheddar, GOAT, PARMESAN, ROQUEFORT, SALTY

- chervil
- chicory
- chiles
- chives
- cilantro
- citrus
- coriander
- cream
- crème fraîche
- cumin
- curry
- dill
- eggs, hard-boiled
- endive
- escarole
- fennel
- fennel seeds
- fish
- French cuisine
- frisée
- garlic
- ginger
- herbs
- honey
- herring
- horseradish
- leeks

**LEMON:** juice, zest  
- lemon balm
- lemon thyme
- lemon verbena  
- lime
- maple syrup
- milk
- mint
- mushrooms (e.g., shiitake)

**MUSTARD, DIJON**

- mustard oil
- nutmeg
- oil: canola, peanut, vegetable, walnut
- OLIVE OIL
- olives, esp. niçoise
- onions: red, white, yellow

**ORANGE:** JUICE, ZEST

- parsley, flat-leaf
- pasta
- pears
- PEPPER: BLACK, WHITE
- pistachios
- potatoes
- radishes
- rosemary
- Russian cuisine
- salads, esp. green
- SALT: kosher, sea
- scallions
- SHALLOTS
- sherry
- soups, esp. borscht
- sour cream
- spinach
- stocks: chicken, veal, vegetable
- sugar: brown, white

**TARRAGON**

- thyme
- vinaigrette, mustard

**VINEGAR:** balsamic, champagne, cider, raspberry, red wine, sherry, tarragon, white wine

- vodka

**WALNUTS AND WALNUT OIL**

- wine, white
- yogurt

---

**BEETS**

**Season:** year-round  
**Taste:** sweet  
**Function:** heating  
**Weight:** medium  
**Volume:** moderate  
**Techniques:** bake, boil, carpaccio, chips, roast, soup, steam

- apples
- arugula
- avocado
- basil
- beans, green
- beef
- beet greens

**BUTTER, UNSALTED**

---

**Flavor Matchmaking: The Charts** 77
Flavor Affinities
beets + chives + orange + tarragon
beets + citrus + goat cheese + olive oil + shallots
beets + crème fraîche + orange + tarragon
beets + dill + sour cream
beets + endive + goat cheese + pistachios
beets + endive + orange + walnuts
beets + goat cheese + walnuts
beets + Gorgonzola cheese + hazelnuts + vinegar
beets + honey + tarragon
beets + mint + yogurt
beets + olive oil + Parmesan cheese + balsamic vinegar
beets + orange + walnuts
beets + potatoes + balsamic vinegar
beets + shallots + vinegar + walnuts

Beets are especially delicious when accented by a salty cheese, whether queso fresco or ricotta salata.
— SHARON HAGE, YORK STREET (DALLAS)

People love fresh beets. Now I won't lay claim to inventing beet salad with Gorgonzola and hazelnuts, but how our version is different from many others is that we marinate the beets. Overnight, we'll marinate peeled beets in Barolo vinegar, shallots, olive oil, salt, and pepper. Using Russian and Polish cooking principles, marinating the beets ensures that the vinegar is able to penetrate them so that they are sure to be tangy.
— ANDREW CARMELLINI, A VOCE (NEW YORK CITY)

I wanted to take beets that are associated with winter and make them into something summery, so I used them for a ceviche. We roasted and pureed them with lime and froze them into a sorbet. We served the beet sorbet flat in a bowl so it looked like soup. From there, we layered thinly sliced raw bay scallops with segments of lime, cilantro, and red onion oil. The dish is very fresh tasting. The other key to this dish was that we had all the flavors of ceviche but did not marinate the scallops in the acid, which makes them rubbery. The scallops treated this way are more delicate, like sushi.
— KATSUYA FUKUSHIMA, MINIBAR (WASHINGTON, DC)
Dishes

Roasted Beet Tartare with Chianti Vinegar and Ricotta Salata
— Mario Batali, Babbo (New York City)

Roasted Beet Salad: Cabrales Blue Cheese, Endive, and Walnuts
— Daniel Boulud/Bertrand Chemel, Café Boulud (New York City)

Roasted Beet Salad with Hazelnut, Gorgonzola, Barolo Vinegar
— Andrew Carmellini, A Voce (New York City)

Squab Borscht with Root Vegetable Pierogi
— Sandy D’Amato, Sanford (Milwaukee)

Roasted Beet Salad with a Warm Farm Egg, Caciocavallo Cheese, and Pickled Spring Onions
— Traci Des Jardins, Jardinière (San Francisco)

We serve a salad that showcases the classic combination of beets, walnuts, and orange. We boil our beets, then slice them thinly on the plate. We add frisée to the salad and, since it is bitter, we mix in Cambozola cheese and candied walnuts. We dress the salad with a sherry-walnut-tarragon vinaigrette, and a mandarin orange sauce. People are surprised when they eat the dish — first, because they find out they like beets, and second, because the frisée is not bitter after being softened by the sweet touches.
— MONICA POPE, T’AFIA (HOUSTON)

Roasted Beet Salad with Shaved Fennel and Chèvre
— Leslie Mackie, Macrina Bakery & Café (Seattle)

Salad of Organic Beets and Gala Apples, “Beauty Heart” Radishes and Upland Cress, Cracked Hazelnuts, Great Hill Blue Cheese, and Quince “Must” Syrup
— Carrie Nahabedian, Naha (Chicago)

Tartare of Yellow Beets with Sturgeon Caviar, and Dashi
— Kaz Okochi, Kaz Sushi Bistro (Washington, DC)

Beets, Frisée, Cambazola, Candied Walnuts, Orange Sauce
— Monica Pope, T’afia (Houston)

Beet, Apple, and Goat Cheese Tartlet with a Hazelnut-Champagne Dressing
— Thierry Rautureau, Rover’s (Seattle)

I like to intensify the flavor of beets by serving them prepared in different ways on the same dish, such as accenting roasted beets with crunchy beet chips and a spiced beet coulis. And I love anything anise-flavored with beets, whether fennel or anise itself.
— BRAD THOMPSON, MARY ELAINE’S AT THE PHOENICIAN (SCOTTSDALE, ARIZONA)
The sweetness of red bell peppers and the acidity of sherry vinegar make for a perfect combination.
  — JOSÉ ANDRÉS, CAFÉ ATLÁNTICO (WASHINGTON, DC)

A lot of people find the skin a turnoff on green bell peppers, so I’ll peel them and cook them, which releases their juice. They’re great cooked down with chorizo, garlic, and onions, which you can serve with shrimp over rice.
  — TONY LIU, AUGUST (NEW YORK CITY)

I’ll cook red bell peppers with onion and garlic on the stove over a low heat for six hours or more, so that they become caramelized and intense. The bell peppers eventually turn into a concentrated red pepper paste. If you have a dish where something is missing, add a little of this and it will fix it! It is superb. I add it to all sorts of things — even pasta.
  — MICHEL RICHARD, CITRONELLE (WASHINGTON, DC)

Green bell peppers are used for the equivalent of Spanish mirepoix. In Spain you don’t see much celery — but you’ll see green pepper, onion, garlic, and leeks.
  — ALEXANDRA RAJ, TÍA POL (NEW YORK CITY)

capers, esp. with roasted peppers
cardamom
carrots
cayenne
CHEESE, esp. feta, Fontina, goat, mozzarella, Parmesan
chile peppers (e.g., fresh green or poblano)
chives
cilantro
coriander
cream
cumin
curry
eggplant
fennel
fennel seeds
garlic
French cuisine
game
game birds
GARLIC
ginger, fresh
goulash
hazelnuts
honey

Indian cuisine
Italian cuisine
lamb
lemon, juice
lemongrass
lime, juice
lovage
marjoram
Mexican cuisine
mint
mirepoix
mushrooms (e.g., shiitake)
mustard
OIL, CANOLA
OLIVE OIL
olives (e.g., green)
ONIONS, ESP. RED OR YELLOW
oregano
paprika, smoked
parsley, flat-leaf
pasta
peas
pepper, black
peppers, piquillo
pine nuts
pizza
polenta
pork
potatoes (e.g., red)
quail
red pepper flakes
rice
rosemary
saffron
salads
salt: kosher, sea
sausages (e.g., chorizo, Italian)
savory
SCALLIONS
sea bass
sesame oil
shallots
squash, esp. summer stews
stir-fried dishes
stocks: chicken, vegetable
sugar (pinch)
swordfish
Tabasco sauce
THYME
TOMATOES
tuna
VINEGAR: balsamic, champagne,
     cider, red wine, sherry, white
     wine
watercress
wine: dry white, sweet sherry
zucchini

Flavor Affinities
bell peppers + basil + currants +
garlic + pine nuts + sherry
vinaigrette
bell peppers + garlic + olive oil +
onion + thyme + zucchini

Dishes
Berry Crème Fraîche Poppy Seed Cake
   — Emily Luchetti, pastry chef, Farallon (San Francisco)

Fresh Fruit: Black Garnet Cherries, Strawberries, Pistachios, Marshall Farms Honey,
Straus Organic Whole Milk Yogurt
   — Emily Luchetti, pastry chef, Farallon (San Francisco)

Red Berry–White Chocolate Trifles
   — Emily Luchetti, pastry chef, Farallon (San Francisco)

BERRIES — IN GENERAL
(See also Raspberries,
Strawberries, etc.)
Season: spring–summer
Weight: light
Volume: quiet–moderate
Techniques: poach, raw

cheese, ricotta
chocolate: dark, milk, white
cream
crème de cassis
crème de menthe
crème fraîche
elderflower syrup
game
honey, wildflower
lemon: juice, zest
lime, juice
mint
pepper, black
poppy seeds
salads, fruit
sour cream
sugar: brown, white
yogurt

BITTER DISHES (e.g.,
greens, barbecue food)
Tips: Salt suppresses bitterness.

BITTERNESS
Taste: bitter
Function: cooling; stimulates appetite; promotes other tastes
Tips: Bitterness relieves thirst.

When a bitter component is added to a dish, it creates a sense of lightness. The hotter the food or drink, the less the perception of bitterness.

arugula
baking powder
baking soda
beans, lima
beer, esp. hoppy (e.g., bitter ales)
bell peppers, green bitters
broccoli rabe
Brussels sprouts
cabbage, green
caffeine (e.g., as in coffee, tea)
chard (e.g., Swiss chard)
chicory
chocolate, dark
cocoa
coffee
cranberries
eggplant
endive
escarole
fenugreek
frisée
grapefruit (bitter-sour)
greens: bitter, dark leafy (e.g., beet, dandelion, mustard, turnip)
herbs, many
horseradish
kale
lettuce, romaine
So many Western cultures don’t incorporate bitterness into their food. In India and Asia, it is a component of a balanced dish. If you give most of America rice with lime pickle, they will not be thrilled. It will be too sour, bitter, and spicy. To introduce the bitter flavor of lime pickle, we will puree it with yogurt and use it for a marinade for whole prawns. That way, it isn’t overwhelming.
— BRAD FARMERIE, PUBLIC (NEW YORK CITY)

I used to love dishes that were rich on rich — but the older I get, the more I look forward to that bitterness, the cleansing bite that makes you want to go back for your next forkful of a dish. Almost every dish in our kitchen is finished with some kind of bitter leaf to serve as a balancing component. That’s why I serve cress or watercress with a steak and potato dish, and arugula with our seared bluefin tuna on braised veal cheeks, and a bed of bitter greens like watercress, frisée, arugula, and shaved endive as the base for our foie gras dish — to cut the richness.
— SHARON HAGE, YORK STREET (DALLAS)

Blackberries are only okay raw, but they are really great cooked.
— GINA DEPALMA, BABBO (NEW YORK CITY)
**BLACK-EYED PEAS**

*Weight*: light–medium

*Volume*: moderate–loud

*Techniques*: simmer

- African cuisine
- bay leaf
- cardamom
- carrots
- cayenne
- celery
- chile peppers, dried red
- cinnamon
- cloves
- coriander
- cumin
- garam masala
- garlic
- ginger, fresh
- GREENS (e.g., collard)
- HAM HOCKS
- Indian cuisine
- oil, peanut
- onions: red, yellow
- pepper, black
- pork
- red pepper flakes
- rice
- salt
- savory
- Southern cuisine (American)
- tomatoes
- turmeric
- vinegar, white wine
- yogurt

**Flavor Affinities**

- black-eyed peas + collard greens + ham hocks
- black-eyed peas + rice + savory

---

**BLUEBERRIES**

*Season*: spring–summer

*Taste*: sour–sweet

*Botanical relatives*: huckleberries

*Weight*: light

*Volume*: quiet–moderate

*Techniques*: cooked, raw

*Tips*: Can substitute huckleberries.

- allspice
- almonds
- apples
- apricots
- bananas
- blackberries
- butter, unsalted
- buttermilk
- chocolate, white
- CINNAMON
- cinnamon basil
- cloves
- cognac
- cornmeal

**cream and ice cream**

Cinnamon with blueberries really intensifies the flavor of the blueberries.

— JERRY TRAUNFELD, THE HERBFARM (WOODINVILLE, WASHINGTON)

If I make a blueberry cobbler, I will macerate the blueberries first with maple and lemon zest.

— MICHAEL LAISKONIS, LE BERNARDIN (NEW YORK CITY)

Blueberries and lemon go really well together. Blueberries are a thick fruit with a lot of pectin in them, and intensely flavored. You need some lemon to cut through that.

— EMILY LUCHETTI, FARALLON (SAN FRANCISCO)

**Dishes**

- **Risotto Fritters with Gingered Blueberries**
  — Jimmy Bradley, The Red Cat (New York City)

- **Warm Blueberry Crostata with Crème Fraiche and Cinnamon**
  — Gina DePalma, pastry chef, Babbo (New York City)

- **Blueberry-Apple-Lavender Faux Gelato and Anise Tuile**
  — Dominique and Cindy Duby, Wild Sweets (Vancouver)
pepper, black
pies
pineapple
pine nuts
port
raspberries
rhubarb
ricotta cheese
rum
salads, fruit
sour cream
strawberries

SUGAR: BROWN, WHITE

tarts
Triple Sec
vanilla
walnuts
watermelon
yogurt

Flavor Affinities
blueberries + cinnamon + cream + sugar
blueberries + cream + lemon zest + mascarpone + sugar
blueberries + honey + port + vanilla
blueberries + lemon + lemon thyme
blueberries + lemon zest + maple syrup
blueberries + mascarpone + peaches

BLUEFISH
Season: spring–early autumn
Weight: medium
Volume: loud
Techniques: bake, blacken, braise, broil, grill, pan roast, poach, sauté

chile peppers, chipotle
cilantro
lemon
lime, juice
marjoram
mustard, brown
olive oil
onions, red
rosemary

sugar
thyme
tomatoes
vinegar, cider
wine

BOK CHOY
Season: year-round
Taste: bitter
Weight: light–medium
Volume: quiet
Techniques: boil, braise, raw, stir-fry

asparagus
beef
broccoli
butter
carrots
cashews
celery
chicken
chile peppers
chili powder
cilantro
coriander
duck
fennel
fish
garlic

ginger
hot sauce
lemon, juice
meats
mirin
mushrooms, esp. shiitake
noodles, rice
oil: peanut, sesame, vegetable
peanuts
pork
rice
rosemary
salads
salmon
scallions
sesame: oil, seeds
shallots

BOUQUET GARNI
Tips: Bundle of herbs is removed after cooking.

French cuisine
soups
stews
stocks

Flavor Affinities
bay leaf + parsley + thyme

BOURBON (See also Whiskey)
Weight: heavy
Volume: loud

apple juice
apricot brandy
barbecue
bitters
butter
butterscotch
cream
desserts
ginger
grapefruit juice
grenadine
honey
ice cream
LEMON JUICE
mint
orange juice
peaches
pecans
pineapple juice
Southern cuisine (American)
SUGAR: BROWN, WHITE
vermouth: dry, sweet

Flavor Affinities
bourbon + grapefruit + honey
bourbon + lemon + peaches
bourbon + lemon + sugar
bourbon + pineapple + sugar

BOYSENBERRIES
Season: summer
Taste: sour–sweet
Weight: light–medium
Volume: quiet–moderate

cream
Kirsch
lemon, juice
nectarines
peaches
sugar
vanilla
wine, esp. dry red

BRAISED DISHES
Season: winter
Tips: Check here for ideas of meats or vegetables to add to a braised dish.

artichokes
beans

beef: brisket, shanks, short ribs, shoulder
cabbage
carrots
celery
chicken: legs, thighs, wings
chili
cod
corned beef and cabbage
duck, legs
endive
fennel
ham hocks
lamb: shanks, shoulder
monkfish
octopus
onions
oxtails
pork: belly, butt, chops, loin, ribs, shank, shoulder
potatoes
pot roast
rabbit
ratatouille
short ribs
skate
stews
tripe
turkey, legs
turnips
veal: breast, rump, shank, shoulder, sirloin, sweetbreads
vegetables, root
venison, shoulder

BRAZILIAN CUISINE (See also Latin American Cuisine)
beans, black
cardamom
chile peppers
cilantro
cloves
coconut milk
garlic
ginger
greens: collard, kale
grilled dishes
meats
nutmeg
onions
orange
parsley
pepper, black
peppers
pork
pumpkin
rice
saffron
sausages
thyme

Flavor Affinities
cream + egg yolks + sugar
pork + beans + greens + onions + oranges

BRINED DISHES
Taste: salty
Tips: Brining meats (i.e., in salt water) before cooking increases their moistness, juiciness, and flavor.

chicken
game birds
pork
poultry
turkey

I don't brine automatically. If I have a chicken that I know will cook up on the dry side, then I will brine it first. If it is a great chicken that will cook up naturally juicy and doesn't need help, then I won't. You can make a pretty strong brine for squab or even chicken — for instance, with thyme or even chile pepper — and the meat will pick up some flavors, but it's still very subtle.

— TRACI DES JARDINS, JARDINIÈRE (SAN FRANCISCO)


**BROCCOLI**

*Season:* autumn–winter  
*Botanical relatives:* Brussels sprouts, cabbage, cauliflower, collard greens, kale, kohlrabi  
*Function:* cooling  
*Weight:* medium  
*Volume:* moderate  
*Techniques:* boil, deep-fry, sauté, steam, stir-fry

- almonds
- anchovies
- basil
- bread crumbs
- butter, unsalted
- caraway seeds
- carrots
- cauliflower
- CHEESE: cheddar, feta, goat, mozzarella, Parmesan, Swiss cheese
- chicken
- chile peppers (esp. green)
- cilantro
- coriander
- cream
- curry and curry leaf
- eggs
- garlic
- ginger, esp. fresh
- hollandaise sauce
- lemon, juice
- lemon balm
- mint
- mustard and mustard seeds
- oil: peanut, sesame
- olive oil
- olives
- onions, esp. green
- oregano
- parsley
- pasta
- pepper, ground
- red pepper flakes
- rice, basmati
- salt
- scallions

Our winter *pistou* features broccoli, and we’re able to make the broccoli flavor very intense. We use not only broccoli stock, but also broccoli florets and even add broccoli puree. There’s both clarity and lightness of flavor that we’re able to achieve without butter or cream this way.  
— DAN BARBER, BLUE HILL AT STONE BARN (POCANTICO HILLS, NEW YORK)

- shallots
- tarragon
- thyme
- vinaigrette
- vinegar: balsamic, red wine, wine

**Flavor Affinities**

- broccoli + anchovies + capers + red pepper flakes + garlic + olives
- broccoli + anchovies + lemon
- broccoli + garlic + lemon juice + olive oil
- broccoli + garlic + tarragon

**BROCCOLINI**

*Season:* year-round  
*Weight:* light–medium  
*Volume:* quiet–moderate  
*Techniques:* blanch, raw, sauté, steam, stir-fry

- almonds
- anchovies
- basil
- beans, white
- butter, unsalted
- cheese, Parmesan
- chicken
- chickpeas
- chiles
- chives
- cream
- fish
- GARLIC
- Italian cuisine
- lemon, juice
- meats
- OLIVE OIL
- oregano
- parsley, flat-leaf
- pasta, esp. orecchiette
- pepper: white, black
- piquillo peppers
- poultry
- prosciutto
- red pepper flakes
- salt
- sausage
- stock, chicken
- tomatoes
- vinegar: balsamic, red wine

**Dishes**

- Orecchiette with Rapini and Sweet Sausage  
  — Mario Batali, Babbo (New York City)
- Broccoli Rabe with Garlic and Oregano  
  — Andrew Carmelzini, A Voce (New York City)
Flavor Affinities
broccoli rabe + anchovies + red pepper flakes + garlic + olive oil
broccoli rabe + garlic + oregano
broccoli rabe + red pepper flakes + oregano

BRUNCH
Customers are picky at brunch. They have all cooked what they think they like, they think they can do it slightly better than we can, and they want it twice as fast. So, we take the classics like pancakes or French toast, use them as building blocks, and push them a little further.

We will offer seasonal pancakes. In the winter, we’ll make buckwheat pancakes with cinnamon and glazed oranges. Bridging spring into summer, we’ll offer corn and saffron pancakes with a spicy poached pear and fresh ricotta. Saffron and corn work really well together because of the floral nature of the saffron and sweetness of the corn. We will use poached pears on the pancakes until switching to blueberries for the summer, which give a real pop. The pears are poached in a red wine syrup with aleppo chile that is a sun-dried chile with a rich, round, sweet spice to it. The chile is not noticeable, but it acts like an acid by lightening, plus cutting the sugar and richness of, the pancake.

When people eat pancakes, they naturally reach for butter. I don’t serve butter with my pancakes and instead serve fresh ricotta. We use ricotta from Anne Saxelby, who supplies us with a fresh, rich, velvety ricotta, and this gives a richness to the dish.

— BRAD FARMERIE, PUBLIC (NEW YORK CITY)

BRUSSELS SPROUTS
Season: autumn–winter
Taste: bitter
Botanical relatives: broccoli, cabbage, cauliflower, collard greens, kale, kohlrabi
Weight: moderate–heavy
Volume: moderate–loud
Techniques: boil, braise, sauté, simmer, steam, stew, stir-fry

 almonds
 apple cider
 apples and apple juice or cider
 artichokes, Jerusalem

BACON
basil
bay leaf
bread crumbs
BUTTER, unsalted
celery
 celery root
 CHEESE: blue, cheddar, goat, Parmesan, provolone, ricotta, Swiss
 chestnuts
 chives
 coriander
 cream
 crème fraîche
dill
 eggs, hard-boiled
 fennel seeds
 garlic
 hazelnuts
 juniper berries
 lemon, juice
 marjoram

BRUSSELS SPROUTS
Season: autumn–winter
Taste: bitter
Botanical relatives: broccoli, cabbage, cauliflower, collard greens, kale, kohlrabi
Weight: moderate–heavy
Volume: moderate–loud
Techniques: boil, braise, sauté, simmer, steam, stew, stir-fry

 almonds
 apple cider
 apples and apple juice or cider
 artichokes, Jerusalem

BACON
basil
bay leaf
bread crumbs
BUTTER, unsalted
celery
 celery root
 CHEESE: blue, cheddar, goat, Parmesan, provolone, ricotta, Swiss
 chestnuts
 chives
 coriander
 cream
 crème fraîche
dill
 eggs, hard-boiled
 fennel seeds
 garlic
 hazelnuts
 juniper berries
 lemon, juice
 marjoram


BULGUR WHEAT
Weight: light–medium
Volume: quiet–moderate
Techniques: steam

 butter
 chicken
 chickpeas
dill
 fish (e.g., branzino, pike, striped bass)

Dishes
Brussels Sprouts, Cranberry Polenta, and Braised Fennel with a Moroccan Olive Relish
— Thierry Rautureau, Rover’s (Seattle)
I love **bulgur** salad. In the summer, I’ll serve it with greens and tomatoes, while in the fall it’s paired with tangerines and pomegranates. I feel the same about it whether it is under branzino or pike or striped bass; it always makes sense.

— SHARON HAGE, YORK STREET (DALLAS)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Green</th>
<th>Lamb</th>
<th>Lentils</th>
<th>Meats</th>
<th>Middle Eastern cuisine</th>
<th>Oils, walnut</th>
<th>Olive oil</th>
<th>Orange</th>
<th>Parsley</th>
<th>Pilaf (key ingredient)</th>
<th>Pine nuts</th>
<th>Pomegranates</th>
<th>Rice</th>
<th>Salads</th>
<th>Soups</th>
<th>Tabbouleh (key ingredient)</th>
<th>Tangerine</th>
<th>Tarragon</th>
<th>Tomatoes</th>
<th>Vegetables</th>
<th>Walnuts</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>greens</td>
<td>lamb</td>
<td>lentils</td>
<td>meats</td>
<td>Middle Eastern cuisine</td>
<td>oils, walnut</td>
<td>olive oil</td>
<td>orange</td>
<td>parsley</td>
<td>pilaf (key ingredient)</td>
<td>pine nuts</td>
<td>pomegranates</td>
<td>rice</td>
<td>salads</td>
<td>soups</td>
<td>tabbouleh (key ingredient)</td>
<td>tangerine</td>
<td>tarragon</td>
<td>tomatoes</td>
<td>vegetables</td>
<td>walnuts</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**BUTTER, BROWN**

(aka Beurre Noisette)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Bananas</th>
<th>Blackberries</th>
<th>Blueberries</th>
<th>Cherries</th>
<th>Cinnamon</th>
<th>Dates</th>
<th>Ginger</th>
<th>Herbs</th>
<th>Honey</th>
<th>Lemon</th>
<th>Lime</th>
<th>Maple syrup</th>
<th>Mayonnaise</th>
<th>Mint</th>
<th>Nectarines</th>
<th>Nutmeg</th>
<th>Oats</th>
<th>Orange</th>
<th>Peaches</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>bananas</td>
<td>blackberries</td>
<td>blueberries</td>
<td>cherries</td>
<td>cinnamon</td>
<td>dates</td>
<td>ginger</td>
<td>herbs</td>
<td>honey</td>
<td>lemon</td>
<td>lime</td>
<td>maple syrup</td>
<td>mayonnaise</td>
<td>mint</td>
<td>nectarines</td>
<td>nutmeg</td>
<td>oats</td>
<td>orange</td>
<td>peaches</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Flavor Affinities**

brown butter + balsamic vinegar + fish
brown butter + banana + nuts

**BUTTERMILK**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Taste:</th>
<th>Weight:</th>
<th>Volume:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>sour</td>
<td>medium</td>
<td>moderate–loud</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

One of my favorite flavors in the world is **brown butter**. A **financier** cake made with brown butter is one of the best things ever. I have been making a brown butter vinaigette for a jillion years! It is a super-easy pan sauce that I love as a warm sauce: I just brown my butter in a pan until it gets the **noisette** [brown] color, then add some balsamic vinegar. It doesn't even need to be expensive balsamic. You make an emulsification in the pan, and add a little salt and pepper and it's done. The flavor of brown butter, salt, and acid is one of my favorites. It works well on different fish like scallops or halibut or soft-shell crabs.

— TRACI DES JARDINS, JARDINIÈRE (SAN FRANCISCO)

**Brown butter** is one of my favorite flavors, and it pairs well with anything nutty, as well as richer fruits like bananas. A classic French **financier** is hands-down one of my favorite French pastries [a cookie made with brown butter, egg whites, flour, and powdered sugar].

Butter tastes great on its own, and in making brown butter you are not adding anything to it — just transforming it, so that it becomes more. The process is simple but a little tricky, as it keeps cooking even after it is off the stove. Something you can do to improve it is — halfway through the cooking process — start whisking the butter, because it intensifies the flavor if you keep the particles suspended.

— MICHAEL LAISKONIS, LE BERNARDIN (NEW YORK CITY)
CABBAGE — IN GENERAL

Season: autumn–winter
Botanical relatives: broccoli, Brussels sprouts, cauliflower, collard greens, kale, kohlrabi
Function: cooling
Weight: medium
Volume: moderate
Techniques: boil, braise, raw, sauté, steam, stir-fry

Cabbage often has the connotation of being heavy, but in the fall, we'll make a fine chiffonade of cabbage that's very light. I like to cut cabbage thin and roast it in a pan so that the edges just get brown because that tastes really good. We figured that out by mistake by putting cabbage into too hot a pan. After the chef raised his voice about how that is the wrong way to cook cabbage, we tasted it, and it was good! We now serve a green cabbage dish cooked this way with caraway seeds and walnuts, then deglazed with Calvados. We also add a little cider vinegar and olive oil to finish. It is a nice, easy marriage. It is not an unpredictable marriage; these things just all work together. We pair this with braised pork belly, but it would also work with a roasted breast of squab with its leg done in a confit.

— MICHAEL ANTHONY, GRAMERCY TAVERN (NEW YORK CITY)

I like coming up with spins using Asian ingredients — such as soaking napa cabbage in ice water to crisp it and serving it with a blue cheese dressing as if it were iceberg lettuce.

— TONY LIU, AUGUST (NEW YORK CITY)
chile peppers, jalapeño
Chinese cuisine
cilantro
coleslaw, Asian-style
cucumber
duck
fish, salmon
garlic
ginger
mint
mushrooms (e.g., shiitakes)
oil, sesame
orange, juice
pork

scallions
seafood
sesame seeds
scallops
shellfish: shrimp
soup
soy sauce
stews
stir-fries
Thai basil
tofu
vinegar, rice
wine, rice

CABBAGE, RED
Season: autumn–winter
Techniques: braise, marinate, raw

APPLES: Golden Delicious,
Rome, tart
bacon
bay leaf
butter, unsalted
caraway seeds
cheese: blue, goat, Gorgonzola,
ricotta salata


**Dishes**

*Pommery Grain Mustard Ice Cream, Red Cabbage Gazpacho*
— Heston Blumenthal, The Fat Duck (England)

*Sauteéd Strawberries in Black Pepper–Cabernet Sauvignon Sauce with Vanilla Bean Ice Cream and Sacristan Cookie*
— Lissa Doumani and Hiro Sone, Terra (St. Helena, California)

---

**CABBAGE, SAVOY**

*Season:* autumn–winter

*Techniques:* boil, braise, raw, roast, steam

- apples
- bacon
- butter, unsalted
- carrots
- cream
- crème fraîche
- garlic
- leeks
- lemon, juice
- oil, peanut
- olive oil
- onions
- parsley, flat-leaf
- parsnips
- pepper, black
- potatoes
- raisins, golden
- salt, kosher
- stock
- thyme
- turnips
- vinegar, cider
- walnuts

**CABERNET SAUVIGNON**

*Weight:* heavy red wine

*Volume:* loud

- beef
- cheese, esp. aged, blue, and/or stinky
- game
- game birds
- lamb
- meat, red
- pepper, black
- steak
- strawberries

**CAJUN CUISINE**

- cayenne
- celery
- chiles
- crayfish
- gumbo
- jambalaya
- onions
- peppers
- rice
- seafood
- tomatoes

**CALAMARI** (See Squid)

**CALF’S LIVER** (See Liver, Calf’s)

**CALVADOS**

*Season:* winter

*Weight:* medium–heavy

*Volume:* moderate–loud

*Tips:* Generally an after-dinner drink.

- apples
- bitters, orange

---

**Flavor Affinities**

- red cabbage + apples + cider vinegar
- red cabbage + bacon + blue cheese + walnuts
- red cabbage + balsamic vinegar + brown sugar
- red cabbage + chestnuts + pork
- red cabbage + duck fat + goat cheese + red wine vinegar
- red cabbage + pancetta + ricotta salata cheese

---

**SUGAR:** BROWN, WHITE

**VINEGAR:** balsamic, cider, red wine, rice wine, sherry, white wine

**wine, dry red**  

---

*Flavor Matchmaking: The Charts*  

91
French cuisine
gin
lemon, juice
orange, juice
pears
rum
sugar
vermouth, sweet

CANADIAN CUISINE
bacon, back (aka Canadian bacon)
beer
berries, esp. wild
cheese
duck
fiddlehead ferns
foie gras
game
game birds
maple syrup
meats, esp. smoked
mushrooms, wild
oysters
rabbit
salmon
seafood
wild rice
wine: ice wine, Riesling

CANTALOUPE
Season: summer
Taste: sweet
Weight: light–medium
Volume: moderate

basil
cilantro
curry powder
ginger
grapefruit
lemon, juice
lemongrass
lime, juice
melon: honeydew, watermelon

Dishes
Cantaloupe “Sashimi,” Raspberry Gel, and Star Anise Dust
— Dominique and Cindy Duby, Wild Sweets (Vancouver)

CUBAN CUISINE
CUBAN CUISINE
CUBAN CUISINE

CANTONÉSE CUISINE
(See Chinese Cuisine)

CAPERS
Taste: salty, sour, pungent
Weight: light
Volume: loud

almonds
anchovies
artichokes
arugula
basil
beans, green
butter sauces
celery
chicken
eggplant
eggs
fish
French cuisine, esp. southern
garlic
Italian cuisine, esp. southern
lamb
lemon, juice
lime
marjoram
meats, esp. richer ones, e.g.,
rib eye steaks
Mediterranean cuisine
mustard
olives
onions
oregano

CARAMEL
Taste: sweet

almonds
APPLES
apricots
bananas
bourbon
cherries
chocolate
cinnamon
coffee and espresso
CREAM AND ICE CREAM
cream cheese
cumin
custard
fruits, tropical
lemon, juice
lime, juice
macadamia nuts
mangoes
nutmeg
passion fruit
peaches
peanuts
pears
pecans
plums
raisins
rhubarb

Flavor Affinities

capers + lemon + marjoram

CUMIN

CINNAMON

cinnamon
CARAWAY SEEDS

Taste: sweet, sour
Weight: light
Volume: medium–loud
Tips: Add late in the cooking process.

Add late in the cooking

ANIS

Taste: sweet, pungent
Function: heating
Weight: medium
Volume: loud
Tips: Add early when cooking.

ANIS

Taste: sweet, sour
Weight: light
Volume: medium–loud
Tips: Add late in the cooking process.

flavor matchmaking: the charts
Thumbelina carrots are something I missed when I moved from working in the country [i.e., Pocantico Hills, New York, where Blue Hill at Stone Barns is located] into Manhattan. Luckily, I recently found these short, fat carrots at the green market. We sauté these carrots over an open fire so that they get a little smoky. When they are cooked, they become soft and creamy. Once cooked, we turn them into a puree with a shot of carrot juice at the last second. We pair this with farro that has been cooked like risotto, then add some pine nuts and more Thumbelina carrots that have been quartered. I don't know what is more seductive: the smooth carrot farro with its light carrot flavor or the carrots themselves that are totally creamy. The dish has no butter or cream but that is not because we are trying to be healthy. The dish just doesn't need it.

MICHAEL ANTHONY, GRAMERCY TAVERN (NEW YORK CITY)

Juices are a great way to freshen up a dish. If you cook a carrot, you lose the “carrotiness” of it. If you make a carrot soup with cooked carrots, it doesn’t become bright. So now we do a carrot base with cooked organic carrots with tops, onions, garlic, and maybe some ginger and lemongrass. With that base we make a really thick soup and then add carrot juice to it. In the end you have fresh and cooked carrots for a better flavor profile.

ANDREW CARMELUNI, A VOCE (NEW YORK CITY)

I had a salad at a restaurant with grated carrots and tarragon leaves with pistachios — and I knew the minute I tasted it that I could adapt this salad to be my own. Instead of grating the carrots, I cut them on the bias and roasted them with a little ginger and juca [an African mix made of almonds, pistachios, hazelnuts, and spices]. To finish the salad, I added the whole tarragon leaves, great pistachio oil, and a raita of yogurt and golden raisins. The dish has wonderful colors and texture and those beautiful whole leaves of tarragon which I had never thought to do myself.

MONICA POPE, T’AFIA (HOUSTON)

Carrots — which pair well with allspice, cinnamon, cloves, and cumin — are one of the few vegetables that shine in desserts. When I first came to the U.S. I discovered carrot cake and that you could use carrots for dessert. I have since made carrot ice cream, cookies, and fruit paste. The problem is that most people trust carrot cake but little else. When I am using carrots for dessert, I like to cook them with orange.

MICHEL RICHARD, CITRONELLE (WASHINGTON, DC)

Carrots and parsnips are similar, and I like the depth of flavor that comes from combining them.

BRAD THOMPSON, MARY ELAINE’S AT THE PHOENICIAN (SCOTTSDALE, ARIZONA)
Dishes
Carrot Cake with Peach-Ginger Cream and Saskatoon Berry Compote
— Dominique and Cindy Duby, Wild Sweets (Vancouver)

Carrot Cake with Vanilla Chantilly, Pecan Praline
— Emily Luchetti, pastry chef, Farallon (San Francisco)

Roasted Carrots and Minted Pea Puree, and Moscato Vinegar
— Cory Schreiber, Wildwood (Portland, Oregon)

chives
cilantro
cinnamon
cloves
coriander
crayfish
cream
crème fraîche
cumin (e.g., Indian cuisine)
curry
curry leaves
dill
fennel
fennel seeds
fish
garlic
GINGER
hazelnuts
honey
lamb
leeks
LEMON, juice
lemon balm
lemon verbena
lime, juice (e.g., Indian cuisine)
lovage
mace
MAPLE SYRUP
mint: spearmint, peppermint
mirepoix (key ingredient)
mustard
mustard seeds, black
nutmeg
oil: peanut, sesame
olive oil
onions, esp. green
ORANGE, juice
PARSLEY, FLAT-LEAF
parsnips
peas
pecans
pepper: black, white
pistachios
potatoes
raisins: black, white
meats, roasted
rosemary
rum
sage
salsify
salt: fleur de sel, kosher
savory
scallops
shallots
spinach
stocks: chicken, vegetable
SUGAR: brown, white (pinch)
tamarind
tarragon
thyme
turnips
veal
vegetables, root
vinaigrette
walnuts
wine, white
yogurt

CASHews
Taste: sweet, rich
Function: warming
Weight: medium–heavy
Volume: loud

almonds
apricots
bananas
caramel
cheese
chicken (e.g., Indian cuisine)
chocolate, esp. white
cinnamon
coconut (e.g. Indian cuisine)
coffee / espresso
curries
dates
ginger
grapefruit
guava
honey
Indian cuisine
kiwi fruit
lemon
macadamia nuts
mango
mint
nutmeg
oil, vegetable
papaya
passion fruit
persimmon
pineapple
rice
rum
salads

Flavor Affinities
carrots + celery + onions (aka mirepoix)
carrots + cilantro + lime
carrots + cinnamon + raisins + sugar + walnuts
carrots + cumin + orange
carrots + dill + orange
carrots + lemon juice + olive oil + parsley
carrots + maple syrup + orange
carrots + olive oil + turnips
carrots + pistachios + tarragon
carrots + raisins + yogurt
salt
sauces
sugar: brown, white
vanilla
vegetables, esp. Indian

**CATFISH**

*Weight:* medium
*Volume:* quiet
*Techniques:* broil, deep-fry, grill, poach, sauté, steam, stir-fry

avocados
bacon
basil
butter, unsalted
cabbage (e.g., coleslaw)
capers
cayenne
chile peppers, chipotle
cilantro
cucumbers
garlic
greens, collard
ham
hush puppies

lemon, juice
oil: peanut, vegetable
olive oil
olives, esp. niçoise
parsley, flat-leaf
pepper: black, Szechuan
pine nuts
potatoes
**salt, kosher**
Southern cuisine (American)
soy sauce
stock, chicken
sugar
tomatillos
tomatoes
vinaigrette
vinegar, cider
wine, dry white

---

**CAULIFLOWER**

*Season:* autumn-winter
*Taste:* astringent
*Botanical relatives:* broccoli, Brussels sprouts, cabbage, collard greens, kale, kohlrabi
*Function:* cooling

---

**Weight:** medium
**Volume:** moderate
**Techniques:** boil, braise, deep-fry, gratin, puree, raw, roast, sauté, simmer, steam

anchovies
apples
bay leaf
bell peppers, esp. green (e.g., Indian cuisine)
bread crumbs
broccoli
brown butter
butter, unsalted
capers
cardamom
caviar
celery seeds
CHEESE: blue, cheddar, Comté, Emmental, goat, Gruyère, Parmesan, pecorino
cervil
chile peppers, dried red
chili sauce
chives
**Dishes**

Variation of Cauliflower with Raisins, Grenobloise Butter, and Fried Pantelleria Capers  
— Daniel Boulud, Daniel (New York City)

Cauliflower Panna Cotta Topped with American Paddlefish Caviar and Cockle Emulsion  
— Gabriel Kreuther, The Modern (New York City)

Cauliflower Rice Pilaf with Raita  
— Vikram Vij and Meeru Dhalwala, Vij's (Vancouver)

The first time I had the combination of cauliflower and curry was when I worked with Daniel Boulud, and he used them together in a soup. I didn't grow up liking cauliflower, but I do now when it's well roasted or pureed. It has good water content, which makes for a very smooth puree, and it has a subtle yet distinct flavor. Apple combines well with both, as it adds acidity and crunch while cutting the stronger flavors.

— BRADFORD THOMPSON, MARY ELAINE'S AT THE PHOENICIAN  
(Scottsdale, Arizona)

Our dish of spicy roasted cauliflower with pine nuts and lime is cauliflower with lime supremes [skinless lime sections]. I love lime because it has more character than lemon.

— HOLLY SMITH, CAFÉ JUANITA (Seattle)

chocolate and cocoa, when cauliflower is caramelized cilantro coriander CREAM AND MILK cumin currants, dried curry powder dill Eastern Mediterranean cuisine egg, hard-boiled, esp. yolk French cuisine garam masala GARLIC ginger greens hollandise sauce Indian cuisine leeks lemon: juice, zest lime Mediterranean cuisine mint mussels mustard, esp. Dijon mustard: oil, seeds nutmeg OIL: canola, grapeseed, vegetable olive oil olives: black, green ONIONS: green, red orange: juice, zest paprika parsley, flat-leaf pasta PEPPER: BLACK, WHITE pine nuts poppy seeds potatoes, red (e.g., Indian cuisine) raisins red pepper flakes saffron SALT: KOSHER, SEA sauces: béchamel, brown butter, cheese, cream, hollandise, Mornay scallions scallops shallots soups stock, chicken tarragon thyme tomatoes (e.g., Indian cuisine) truffles, white turmeric vinegar: red, white wine watercress yogurt (e.g., Indian cuisine)

**Flavor Affinities**

cauliflower + anchovies + red pepper flakes + garlic + olive oil cauliflower + bread crumbs + brown butter + parsley cauliflower + cilantro + cloves + cumin + turmeric cauliflower + cream + sorrel cauliflower + curry + apple cauliflower + curry + vinegar cauliflower + garlic + mint + pasta cauliflower + pine nuts + lime

**CAVIAR**

Season: winter  
Taste: salty  
Weight: very light  
Volume: quiet–loud

blini, esp. whole wheat bread, esp. toast points chives crème fraîche eggs French cuisine lemon onion, esp. raw pepper: black, white potatoes Russian cuisine salt shallots sour cream vodka white chocolate wine, Champagne
There is an obvious reason why you could argue that white chocolate and caviar go together and that is because of the fact that you are pairing fat and salt. The combination, however, runs a lot deeper than that. The amine [organic chemical compounds] levels in caviar and white chocolate are such that the two ingredients almost “melt” together.

— HESTON BLUMENTHAL, THE FAT DUCK (ENGLAND)

### Dishes

**Yellowtail Tuna with Spinach Puree, Potato Salad, and Osetra Caviar and Vodka Sauce**
— David Bouley, Danube (New York City)

**Scrambled Egg with Lime Crème Fraîche and Sturgeon Caviar**
— Thierry Rautureau, Rover’s (Seattle)

**Royal Osetra Caviar Served with Warm Crepes, Toast, and Crème Fraîche**
— Eric Ripert, Le Bernardin (New York City)

**Caviar Pasta: Osetra on a Nest of Tagliolini, Quail Egg, and Bacon Carbonara Sauce**
— Eric Ripert, Le Bernardin (New York City)

### CAYENNE, GROUND

**Taste:** piquant  
**Function:** warming  
**Weight:** light  
**Volume:** loud  
**Tips:** Cayenne tastes hotter the more it cooks.

lobster  
meat  
Mexican cuisine  
oil  
onions  
potatoes  
rice  
sardines  
sauces  
shellfish  
soups  
stews  
tomatoes

**AVOID**  
caviar  
delicate flavors  
truffles

Using a pinch of cayenne is like having a turbo versus a regular engine in your car. The cayenne goes into you so fast it is like creating an engine for your flavors. It will create a certain heat and speedy access to your flavors. I use cayenne in everything. However, it has to be done carefully. It has to be just a pinch at the last minute. If you are using basil, it will make the flavor even stronger.

— ERIC RIPERT, LE BERNARDIN (NEW YORK CITY)

### Flavor Affinities

cayenne + coriander + cumin + garlic

### CELERY

**Season:** year-round  
**Taste:** astringent  
**Botanical relatives:** carrots  
**Function:** cooling  
**Weight:** light  
**Volume:** moderate–loud  
**Techniques:** boil, braise, cream, gratiné, raw, sauté, steam, stir-fry

basil  
bay leaf  
beets  
butter  
capers  
carrots  
cheese, esp. blue, feta, goat, Gruyère, Parmesan, Roquefort  
chervil  
chicken and other poultry  
chickpeas and hummus  
chives  
cream  
cream cheese  
curry  
dill  
eggs, hard-boiled  
fish  
garlic  
legumes  
lemon, juice  
lovage  
mirepoix (key ingredient)  
mushrooms, wild  
mustard, esp. Dijon

### CELERY

**Season:** year-round  
**Taste:** astringent  
**Botanical relatives:** carrots  
**Function:** cooling  
**Weight:** light  
**Volume:** moderate–loud  
**Techniques:** boil, braise, cream, gratiné, raw, sauté, steam, stir-fry

basil  
bay leaf  
beets  
butter  
capers  
carrots  
cheese, esp. blue, feta, goat, Gruyère, Parmesan, Roquefort  
chervil  
chicken and other poultry  
chickpeas and hummus  
chives  
cream  
cream cheese  
curry  
dill  
eggs, hard-boiled  
fish  
garlic  
legumes  
lemon, juice  
lovage  
mirepoix (key ingredient)  
mushrooms, wild  
mustard, esp. Dijon

### Flavor Affinities

cayenne + coriander + cumin + garlic

### CELERY

**Season:** year-round  
**Taste:** astringent  
**Botanical relatives:** carrots  
**Function:** cooling  
**Weight:** light  
**Volume:** moderate–loud  
**Techniques:** boil, braise, cream, gratiné, raw, sauté, steam, stir-fry

basil  
bay leaf  
beets  
butter  
capers  
carrots  
cheese, esp. blue, feta, goat, Gruyère, Parmesan, Roquefort  
chervil  
chicken and other poultry  
chickpeas and hummus  
chives  
cream  
cream cheese  
curry  
dill  
eggs, hard-boiled  
fish  
garlic  
legumes  
lemon, juice  
lovage  
mirepoix (key ingredient)  
mushrooms, wild  
mustard, esp. Dijon
Of all vegetables, celery has one of the strongest flavors. To me, it is almost like a truffle. In a mirepoix, you need all the vegetables — but if I could have only one, it would be celery. I love its earthy flavor. Celery and black truffles are my favorite combination. They work in part because they come out of the ground at the same time of year. Any root vegetable also works with celery. I enjoy celery root and celery separately as well as together.

— DANIEL HUMM, ELEVEN MADISON PARK (NEW YORK CITY)

DANIEL HUMM.
allspice
bay leaf
beef
breads
Cajun/Creole cuisines
cheese, e.g., blue
celery
chicken
coriander
crab
dill
eggplant
eggs
fennel seeds
fish
German cuisine
ginger
Italian cuisine
mayonnaise
mushrooms
mustard
onions
paprika
peas
pepper
potatoes
Russian cuisine
salads and salad dressings
sauces
shellfish
soups
stews
stuffing
thyme
tomatoes
vegetables and vegetable juices
Worcestershire sauce

CHAMPAGNE
Weight: light-medium
Volume: quiet-moderate

blackberries
caviar
cherries
cranberries
lemon
lime
melon
mint
raspberries
strawberries

CHARD (aka Swiss chard)
Season: year-round
Taste: bitter
Weight: medium-heavy
Volume: moderate-loud
Techniques: boil, braise, parboil, sauté, steam, stir-fry
anchovies
bacon
basil
bay leaf
bread crumbs
butter, unsalted
capers
cheese: Fontina, Gruyère, Parmesan
chickpeas
chile peppers
cilantro
cumin
cured meats
egg dishes
eggs, hard-boiled
*GARLIC
Italian cuisine, esp. pasta
lamb, esp. chops
leeks
lemon: juice, zest

mushrooms, chanterelle
oil, peanut
olive oil
olives
onions, esp. spring or yellow
orange, zest
oregano
pasta (including using to color green pasta)
pepper: black, white
pine nuts
polenta
potatoes
raisins
red pepper flakes
saffron
salt, kosher
shallots
spinach
stews
stocks: chicken, vegetable thyme
tomatoes
vinegar: balsamic, red wine

Flavor Affinities
chard + bell peppers + pecorino cheese + eggplant
chard + red pepper flakes + lemon juice

CHARDONNAY
Weight: medium-heavy
Volume: quiet-loud
butter and butter sauces
chicken
crab
cream and cream sauces
fish
lobster
salmon
scallops
shellfish
veal
CHEESE — IN GENERAL
(See also specific cheeses)
Taste: sweet-sour
Function: cooling

apples
breads, esp. neutral-flavored
celery, esp. with cheese sauces
and dishes
cherries, esp. with soft cheeses
cured meats, esp. ham
dates, esp. Medjool
dried fruits, esp. dates, figs
grapes
nuts, esp. hazelnuts, walnuts
pears

CHEESE, ASIAGO
almonds
bacon
figs

Since cheese is a near-perfect food, I sometimes look for the few nutrients missing in cheese that can be found in other foods. The two essential nutrients that cheese does not provide are vitamin C and fiber. This recommends fruits especially — and makes a great start to the day: cheese, some high-fiber vitamin C–rich fruit, some whole grain organic bread, and coffee. The breads I prefer with cheese are usually neutral flavored, though I fully appreciate the nutty or herbed or fruity breads as natural partners for cheeses. The main reason I prefer neutral flavors in my breads is because I don’t want to meddle with the flavors in the cheeses themselves. I’m kind of a purist on that! Usually, the softer the cheese, the harder the bread — to an extent. And high-pectin, high-fiber fruits [e.g., apples, pears, apricots, plums, nectarines, peaches, figs] make natural accompaniments for many, many cheeses.

Which cheeses? My faves with my espresso to which I add a little unfiltered raw honey would be the pressed sheep milk cheeses: Ossau Iraty, Roncal, Zamorano, Berkswell, Spenwood, Trade Lake Cedar, Vermont Shepherd, manchego, or Pecorino Foglie Noce. But I’m happy with whatever is looking good, and preferably the harder aged cheeses: sheep, goat, or cow.

— MAX McCALMAN, ARTISANAL CHEESE CENTER (NEW YORK CITY)
With aged or strong cheese, you need something fruity or sweet to contrast with the strong flavor. Pecorino is very strong, so you need something sweet with it. With an aged or hard cheese, I like to serve some chestnut honey, a fruit jam, or watermelon confiture. If I have some aged goat cheese, I like a mostarda [Italian mustard fruit]. With sharper cheese, I also like a nice sweet wine, especially an Italian Passito. With fresh young cheese, I simply like some good bread. Chestnut honey, while good with aged cheese, does not work with a young cheese.

— Odette Fada, San Domenico (New York City)

Honey, jam, and mostarda go great with cheese. Most honey works best with younger cheeses and soft-ripened cheeses, especially if they have a chalky quality to them. I love mountain Gorgonzola with chestnut honey; it is crazy! In Italy, we call jam a confitura or marmalata. I like it with saltier cheeses like Parmesan, or with more assertive cheeses. Mostarda is made of fruits cooked in a white wine mustard syrup until they are candied. So, you have a sweet candy effect with the spicy mustard. It goes with any savory firm cheese, and particularly well with pecorino and Taleggio.

— Gina Depalma, Babbo (New York City)
A wonderful combination I discovered recently that surprised me was Azeitao cheese with foie gras.
— MAX McALMAN, ARTISANAL CHEESE CENTER (NEW YORK CITY)

I like blue cheese, either Roquefort or Stilton, served simply with a walnut bread and a glass of port.
— GABRIEL KREUTHER, THE MODERN (NEW YORK CITY)

In general, the more intense a blue cheese is in its own right, the lighter and more delicate the honey you’ll want to pair it with. I like Colorado star thistle honey [which is creamy, with cinnamon notes].
— ADRIAN MURCIA, CHANTERELLE (NEW YORK CITY)

nuts
olive oil
pears
pecans
plums
salads
strawberries
vinegar: balsamic, sherry

**CHEESE, CHEDDAR**

APPLES
bacon
brandy, apple, e.g., Calvados
bread, esp. French, pumpernickel, or whole wheat
butter, unsalted
cayenne
chutney, Indian
cider
cream
dates
eyeg dishes
fennel
garlic
grapes
hamburgers
honey, esp. fruit (e.g., blueberry, raspberry)
mirepoix, esp. for soup
mostarda (mustard fruits)
nuts
oil, vegetable
paprika
pasta, esp. macaroni
pears and pear paste
pecans
pepper, black
potatoes
quince paste
stock, chicken
thyme
walnuts

**CHEESE, COLBY**
apples
bacon
beer
bread, rye
cider, apple
onions
pears
potatoes

**CHEESE, COMTÉ**
ham
hazelnut oil
greens, salad

Cheddar is a particularly friendly cheese to food pairing partners.
— ADRIAN MURCIA, CHANTERELLE (NEW YORK CITY)

**CHEESE, COW’S MILK — IN GENERAL**
cherries
fruits, stone (e.g., apricots, cherries, nectarines, peaches, plums, etc.)
melons

**CHEESE, CREAM**
(See Cream Cheese)

**CHEESE, EMMENTAL**
bacon
bread, rye, esp. lighter potatoes

**CHEESE, ÉPOISSES**
cherries
marmalade, citrus
pears

**CHEESE, EXPLORATEUR**
pomegranate

**CHEESE, FETA**
bell peppers, red
bread: olive, pita
cheese, ricotta
chickpeas
dill
Eastern Mediterranean cuisine
eggplant
figs
garlic
grapes
Greek cuisine
honey
lamb
lemon
meats, grilled
mint
olive oil
olives: black, Greek
onions, red
pasta
pepper, black
sage
salads
sauces
shrimp
spinach
thyme
vinaigrette, red wine
walnuts
watermelon
zucchini

Flavor Affinities
feta cheese + chicken + mint
feta cheese + roasted red bell peppers + mint
feta cheese + salad greens + mint

CHEESE, FONTINA
chutney
endive
fondue
fruit, fresh
grapes
mostarda (mustard fruits)
pears
plums
salads
sandwiches
walnuts

CHEESE, FROMAGE BLANC
cranberries, sweetened
figs

CHEESE, GARROTXA
figs

CHEESE, GOAT'S MILK — IN GENERAL
almonds
honey
nuts
oil, walnut
olive oil
olives
pepper, black
pomegranate
thyme

I enjoy the combination of cherries with Lancashire [a premier English cow's milk cheese].
— MAX McCALMAN, ARTISANAL CHEESE CENTER (NEW YORK CITY)

Dishes
Goat Cheese Tortelloni with Dried Orange and Wild Fennel Pollen
— Mario Batali, Babbo (New York City)
Rich Goat's Milk Cheesecake with Blossom Honey Ice Cream, Fuyu Persimmons, and Huckleberries
— Elizabeth Dahl, pastry chef, Naha (Chicago)
Mixed Green Salad with Coach Farm's Triple Crème Goat Cheese, Toasted Pumpkin Seeds, and Apple Cider Vinegar
— Gabriel Kreuther, The Modern (New York City)
Goat Cheese Salad: Braised Fennel, Toasted Hazelnuts, Orange, and Extra-Virgin Olive Oil
— Alfred Portale, Gotham Bar and Grill (New York City)

CHEESE, GOAT — FRESH (e.g., chèvre)
almonds
apples, esp. green
apricots, esp. dried
basil
beets
bell peppers: green, esp. red
blackberries
bread, esp. French or with nuts, olives, and/or raisins, whole wheat
broccoli
butter
cauliflower
cheese: Parmesan, ricotta

I enjoy pomegranate with my Ibores [a Spanish goat's milk cheese].
— MAX McCALMAN, ARTISANAL CHEESE CENTER (NEW YORK CITY)

Dishes
Almond-Infused Goat's Milk Cheesecake
— Carrie Nahabedian, Naha (Chicago)
Mediterranean "Greek Salad" of Mt. Vikos Feta, Kalamata Olives, Plum Tomatoes, Cucumbers, Torn Mint and Oregano, Warm Feta Cheese "Turnover"
— Carrie Nahabedian, Naha (Chicago)
I will pair thyme with goat cheese and cherries.
— MICHAEL LAISKONIS, LE BERNARDIN (NEW YORK CITY)

If you are going to make a dessert with cheese, you want it to be a softer cheese. I make a goat cheese cake with berries and for that I use a milder goat cheese. Goat cheese and lemon work really well together, because the acidity of the lemon juice cuts the fat of the goat cheese.
— EMILY LUCHETTI, FARALLON (SAN FRANCISCO)

I like strawberries with my Loire Valley chèvres.
— MAX McCALMAN, ARTISANAL CHEESE CENTER (NEW YORK CITY)

LEMON, juice
milk
mint
nutmeg
nuts
oil, sesame
olive oil
olives
onions, esp. green, Spanish, or Vidalia
orange: juice, zest
parsley, flat-leaf
pasta
pears: dried, fresh
pecans
pepper: black, white
pesto
pine nuts
pistachios
port
potatoes
raspberries
red pepper flakes
rosemary
rum, esp. light
sage
salami
salt, sea
shallots
sour cream
star anise
strawberries
sugar: brown, white
thyme
vegetables, raw
vinegar, cider
tarragon
thyme
tomatoes and tomato jam
vanilla
vinegar: balsamic, sherry
walnuts
**Flavor Affinities**

- goat cheese + almonds + honey + pears
- goat cheese + cherries + thyme
- goat cheese + fennel seeds + orange zest + pasta
- goat cheese + honey + persimmons
- goat cheese + pancetta + shallots

Some enjoy the combination of chocolate and cheese. If the idea intrigues you, I recommend trying a good dark chocolate with an aged Alpine cheese [a style native to the French and Swiss Alps, of which *Gruyère* is one of the most famous], such as Hoch Ybrig, Appenzeller, or Prattigauer.

— MAX McCALMAN, ARTISANAL CHEESE CENTER (NEW YORK CITY)

Swiss mountain cheeses [e.g., Appenzeller, Comté, *Gruyère*] are a cheese snob’s Holy Grail of cheeses. Their “cooked milk” character makes them great with dark, cooked fruit preserves such as fig preserves. They also go well with oloroso sherry, which has its own dark, cooked fruit flavors.

— ADRIAN MURCIA, CHANTERELLE (NEW YORK CITY)

### CHEESE, GORGONZOLA

- apples
- brandy
- cherries: sour, sweet
- cognac
- corn
- cream
- *dulce de leche*
- figs
- grapes
- honey, esp. chestnut
- Italian cuisine
- mint
- nuts
- olive oil
- pasta
- PEARS
- pistachios
- pomegranate
- prosciutto
- salads (e.g., spinach)
- sugar
- thyme
- WALNUTS
- wine, sweet

**Flavor Affinities**

Gorgonzola + mint + walnuts

---

### CHEESE, GOUĐA

- apples, esp. with aged and/or smoked cheese
- apricots
- cherries, esp. with young cheese
- melon
- mushrooms
- peaches, esp. with young cheese
- pears, esp. with aged or smoked cheese
- spinach

### CHEESE, GRUYÈRE

- apples
- arugula
- bread
- cherries
- chicken
- chocolate, dark, esp. with aged Gruyère
- fondues
- garlic
- ham
- hazelnuts
- onions
- soufflés
- soups, esp. onion
- spinach

### CHEESE, HOJA SANTA

- mint
- raspberries

### CHEESE, JACK

- almonds
- figs
- pears
- pecans
- prunes
- quince paste
- walnuts

### CHEESE, MAHON

(aged Spanish cheese)

- quince paste

### CHEESE, MANCHEGO

- ALMONDS, esp. roasted
- Spanish anchovies
- bell peppers, roasted
- bread, esp. crusty and fig or other fruit bread
- figs and fig cake
- ham, Serrano
- olive oil
- olives, green or black Spanish
- onions, esp. caramelized
- parsley
- peppers, piquillo
- plum paste
- *QUINCE PASTE*
- salads
- Spanish cuisine
- tomatoes

**Flavor Affinities**

manchego cheese + almonds + quince paste
CHEESE, MASCARPONE
(See Mascarpone)

CHEESE, MONTEREY JACK
chicken
enchiladas
fresh fruit

CHEESE, MOZZARELLA
anchovies
BASIL
bell peppers, roasted
garlic
Italian cuisine
meats, cured (e.g., salami)
olive oil

Dishes
Mozzarella di Bufala, Eggplant Agrodolce, Artichoke con Pesto
— Andrew Carmellini, A Voce (New York City)

olives
oregano
pancetta
pasta
pepper, black
pizza
prosciutto
radicchio
rosemary
sage
salt: kosher, sea
sopressata

spinach
TOMATOES
tomatoes, sun-dried
truffles, black
vinegar: balsamic, red wine

Flavor Affinities
mozzarella cheese + basil + olive oil + tomatoes
mozzarella cheese + olives + prosciutto
If you open my refrigerator at home, you will always find a piece of cheese! I love many cheeses, but there will definitely be a piece of Parmigiano-Reggiano. It never goes bad and is so versatile. I can cut a piece off to go with a glass of Prosecco as an aperitif, serve it after dinner with red wine, slice a piece for a sandwich, or grate it over some pasta.

— ODETTE FADA, SAN DOMENICO (NEW YORK CITY)

I was in Parma, Italy, in a restaurant and out came my glass of Prosecco followed by the server cutting off hunks of Parmigiano-Reggiano to serve me. I thought it was a beautiful way to begin! It is a way to leave your world behind, and begin your meal.

— HOLLY SMITH, CAFÉ JUANITA (SEATTLE)

Dishes

Parmesan Broth with Prosciutto and Peas, Scallion Parmesan Flan

— Sanford D'Amato, Sanford (Milwaukee)
Gina DePalma of New York’s Babbo on Babbo’s Cheese Plate

At Babbo, I oversee the cheese selection, which has seven choices. The biggest challenge with Italian cheese is that there are so many “superstars” that you just can’t not offer them. So, in the seven slots we have many standard choices but they are amazing:

- **Parmigiano-Reggiano**: This is the “undisputed king of all cheeses” according to Mario [Batali]!
- **Taleggio**: This washed-rind cheese is very wet, has the distinctive orange color, and is gooey. The interior is sweet and the rind is assertive.
- **Gorgonzola Piccante**: This is firmer, bluer, nutty, and just amazing!
- **Coach Farm Goat**: Though it is not from Italy, it is the goat cheese we choose. [Mario Batali’s wife’s family owns the Coach Farm Dairy.]
- **Robiola**: This is a soft-ripened cheese from Piedmont.
- **Pecorino**: This is a sheep’s milk cheese that is nothing like the Pecorino-Romano that you get in your deli to grate over pasta. This is made in many areas around Italy. We may use one from the south or Tuscany or one that is rubbed with tomato or aged underground from another part of the country.
- **The Seventh Cheese**: I play around with the seventh cheese and change it often but a recent favorite is a Piave, which is like an English Cheddar. It is from the Veneto along the Piave River.

**Flavor Affinities**

**Roquefort cheese + figs + pears**

**CHEESE, SHEEP’S MILK — IN GENERAL**

- almonds
- apricots
- bread, esp. olive
- ham, esp. Serrano
- honey
- nuts
- olive oil
- olives
- panforte
- pepper, black
- quince paste

**Dishes**

**Bruschetta with Favas and New York State Ricotta**
— Mario Batali, Babbo (New York City)

**Sheep’s Milk Ricotta Ravioli with Heirloom Tomato, Arugula, Vin Cotto**
— Andrew Carmellini, A Voce (New York City)

**Ricotta and Robiola Cheesecake with Figs and Raspberries**
— Gina DePalma, pastry chef, Babbo (New York City)

**Corn and Saffron Pancakes with a Spicy Poached Pear and Fresh Ricotta**
— Brad Farmerie, Public (New York City)

**Bellwether Farms Ricotta Fritters with Cara Cara and Blood Orange Compote, Vanilla Créme Anglaise**
— Emily Luchetti, pastry chef, Farallon (San Francisco)

**Ricotta Gnocchi with Fava Beans, Sage, and Lemon Oil**
— Judy Rodgers, Zuni Café (San Francisco)
I’m a fan of apricot with Berkswell [an English sheep’s milk cheese].
— MAX McCALMAN, ARTISANAL CHEESE CENTER (NEW YORK CITY)

**CHEESE, SPANISH**
(See Cheese: Cabrales, Manchego)

**CHEESE, STILTON**
apples
dates
honey
pears
pecans
port
salads
sauces
walnuts

**CHEESE, SWISS**
asparagus
bread, esp. pumpernickel
grapes
ham
pears

**CHEESE, TALEGGIO**
hazelnuts
mostarda (mustard fruits)
pears

**CHEESE, TRIPLE CRÈME**
cherries
figs
hazelnuts
herbs
honey
mostarda (mustard fruits)
nut bread
olives
pears
vegetables, roasted
walnuts

**CHEESE, VACHERIN**
cherries
hazelnuts

---

**CHEESE, VALDEON**
meats: cured, smoked steak

**CHEESE, VERMONT SHEPHERD**
almonds
apples
fennel

**CHERRIES — IN GENERAL**

- **Season:** late spring–late summer
- **Taste:** sweet
- **Weight:** light–medium
- **Volume:** moderate
- **Techniques:** flambé, poach, raw, stew

- allspice
- ALMONDS
- amaretto
- apricots
- Armagnac
- bourbon
- brandy
- butter, unsalted
- buttermilk
- cake
- caramel
- cassis

**CHEESE, VACHERIN**
cherries
hazelnuts

---

**CHEESE AND ICE CREAM**
currants, red
custards (e.g., crème caramel, flan, etc.)
duck
fennel
figs
game birds
garlic
ginger
goose
Grand Marnier
hazelnuts
honey
ice cream, vanilla
*KIRSCH
LEMON: juice, zest
lime, juice
liqueur: almond, orange-mascarpone
meats, fatty, esp. roasted
melon
meringue
nectarines
nuts
oats
orange: juice, zest
pâté
peaches
pecans
pepper: black, green
pistachios
plums
pork
port, esp. ruby
poultry, fatty, esp. roasted
quince
raspberries
rice pudding
rose hips
rum
sage, esp. with tart cherries
salads
salt
sour cream
stocks: chicken, duck, veal
SUGAR
VANILLA
vermouth, sweet
Cherries can stand up to a lot of flavors. They have more juice to them as well as complexity. Almonds go with cherries. Dark chocolate actually goes better with cherries than it does raspberries, and white chocolate works with cherries as well.

— EMILY LUCHETTI, FARALLON (SAN FRANCISCO)
If you have perfect ingredients in the summertime, you don’t have to do much to them. With our perfect cherries [Michigan, while at Tribute restaurant], we halved them, sprinkled them with sugar, and heated them with a blowtorch so that they were just warmed through. The slightly caramelized sugar made a huge difference in the flavor. I used a goat cream cheese worked to a texture similar to mascarpone cheese, which I shaped into quenelles. Served alongside were some ice wine vinegar caramel sauce and a crispy crepe. Before serving, I added individual thyme leaves and a crack of black pepper. These are all really classic flavors, especially the cheese with black pepper and cherries.
— Michael Laiakonis, Le Bernardin (New York City)

I was reading an old Fannie Farmer cookbook from the late 1800s about making cherry jam. In the recipe, they would take the cherry pits and crush them. I thought it was crazy but tried it. When you take cherry pits and crush them, it gives you an almond flavor. I made some pickled sour cherries with the crushed pits in cheesecloth with the pickling liquid and I got this great almondy flavor that went deep inside the cherries.
— Andrew Carmellini, A Voce (New York City)

I like to let them shine on their own. But I do really like cherries and grappa. Mario [Batali] has a home in Michigan and he brought me back a case of cherries. They were so perfect I just macerated them in grappa and torn mint leaves. I served them in a bowl with a dollop of mascarpone. Cherries also work well with mint.
— Gina DePalma, Babbo (New York City)

I loved cherries so much growing up that I would climb up our cherry tree and eat as many as I could. Then I would realize I didn’t know how to get back down and would cry until the neighbors would get me down. I still love cherries and especially in cherry pie or a clafoutis. Cherries work well with vanilla or poached in red wine, but I like to keep them as simple as possible.
— Gabriel Kreuther, The Modern (New York City)

Dishes

Cherry-Almond Blancmange over Frangipane and Crème Fraiche Soup
— Dominique and Cindy Duby, Wild Sweets (Vancouver)

Warm Black Garnet Cherry–Rhubarb Pie with Almond Butter Crunch Ice Cream
— Emily Luchetti, pastry chef, Farallon (San Francisco)

Black Garnet Cherries, Strawberries, Pistachios, Marshall Farms Honey, Straus Organic Whole Milk Yogurt
— Emily Luchetti, pastry chef, Farallon (San Francisco)

| Cherries season: spring–autumn
| Weight: delicate, soft-leaved
| Volume: very quiet
| Tips: Always use cherries fresh, not cooked.

asparagus
basil
beans, esp. fava, green
beets
bouquet garni (key ingredient)
carrots
cheese, ricotta
chicken
chives
crab
cream
cream cheese
dill
eggs and egg dishes
fennel
fines herbes (key ingredient, along with chives, parsley, tarragon)
fish
French cuisine
game birds
halibut
herbes de Provence (typical ingredient, along with basil, fennel, marjoram, rosemary, sage, summer savory, and thyme)
leeks
lemon, juice
lemon thyme
lettuce
lobster
marjoram
mint
mushrooms
mustard
parsley
peas
potatoes
poultry
One thing chervil has going for it is its looks. **Chervil** is so cute, it is adorable! You can very carefully make little tiny brushes of them and put them around the plate. Not only does it taste good, but it says to the people eating the dish that you are taking care of them.

— **DAVID WALDUCK,** **CHANTERELLE (NEW YORK CITY)**

Provençal cuisine

- **salads,** esp. potato, and salad dressings
- sauces, esp. creamy
- scallops
- shallots
- **shellfish**
- sole
- soups, esp. creamy
- spinach
- squash
- tarragon
- thyme
- tomatoes and tomato sauces
- veal
- vegetables
- venison

**Flavor Affinities**

- chervil + chives + fish + parsley
- chervil + chives + parsley + tarragon (fines herbes)

---

**CHESTNUTS**

**Season:** autumn–winter

**Taste:** sweet

**Weight:** medium–heavy

**Volume:** quiet–moderate

**Techniques:** boil, candy, grill, puree, raw, roast

---

**Dishes**

**Chestnut Spice Cake with Mascarpone Cream**

— Gina DePalma, pastry chef, Babbo (New York City)

**Chestnut Sugar Tart, Crème Fraiche**

— Johnny Iuzzini, pastry chef, Jean Georges (New York City)

---

I like to take one ingredient and see how much I can do with it. I made a frozen chestnut semifreddo with bits of candied **chestnuts.** This was then set on an orange-soaked chestnut sponge cake, next to a chestnut wafer and chestnut paste. I needed a complementary flavor, and I have always liked the combination of pear and chestnut. They both have a richness but depending on how the pear is handled, it can add freshness and acidity. I roasted the pear in sugar, butter, and ice wine vinegar and finished it in the oven until soft. The pear was then diced tartare-like and had orange confit added. The juices from the pear were the only sauce.

— **MICHAEL LAISKONIS,** **LE BERNARDIN (NEW YORK CITY)**

**Chestnuts** have a bursty flavor and they work with chocolate and pears. You have to combine them with earthy flavors. If you paired chestnuts with berries, they would just get lost.

— **EMILY LUCHETTI,** **FARALLON (SAN FRANCISCO)**

---

**APPLES:** CIDER, FRUIT, JUICE

- Armagnac
- bacon
- bay leaf
- brandy
- Brussels sprouts
- butter, unsalted
- caramel
- cardamom
- celery
- celery root
- celery seeds
- cheese, ricotta
- chicken (accompaniment)
- chocolate, esp. dark or white
- cinnamon
- cloves
- coffee
- cognac

**CREAM OR MILK**

- crème fraîche
- desserts
- duck
- fennel
- fennel seeds
- figs
- game (accompaniment)
- ginger
- ham
- honey, esp. chestnut
- Italian cuisine, esp. Tuscan
- lemon, juice
- lentils
- maple syrup
- mascarpone
- meats
- mushrooms: cepes/porcinis
- nutmeg
- olive oil
- onions
- orange
- pasta
- pears
- pepper: black, white
- plums
- pork (accompaniment)
- poultry (e.g., chicken, turkey)
- prosciutto
- prunes
raisins
raspberries
risotto
rum
sage
salt, sea
sauces
sausages
shallots
sherry
stew
STOCK, CHICKEN
stuffing (e.g., for poultry)
sugar: brown, white
sweet potatoes
thyme
vanilla
wine, esp. sweet Marsala or sherry

AVOID
berries

Flavor Affinities
chestnuts + apples + cream
chestnuts + bacon + fennel
chestnuts + crème fraîche + sugar
chestnuts + orange + pear

CHICKEN

Function: heating
Weight: medium
Volume: quiet
Techniques: bake, braise, broil, deep-fry, grill, poach, roast, sauté, steam, stew, stir-fry

allspice
almonds
anise
apples
apricots, dried
artichokes
avocados
bacon
bananas
BASIL: regular, cinnamon

BAY LEAF
beans: red, white
beer
bell peppers: red, green, yellow
bouquet garni
brandy, esp. apple (in sauce)
bread crumbs or panko
BUTTER, UNSALTED
butter
Calvados
capers
cardamom
CARROTS
cashews (e.g., Indian cuisine, etc.)
cauliflower
cayenne
celery
celery root
celery seeds
chard
cheese: Asiago, blue, Comté, Emmental, Fontina, Parmesan
chiro
chicken livers
chickpeas
chile peppers: dried red (e.g., chipotle), fresh green (e.g., jalapeño)
chives
cider
cilantro
CINNAMON
cloves
coconut milk (e.g., Indian cuisine, etc.)
coriander
corn
cranberries: dried
cream (e.g., French, Indian cuisine, etc.)
créme fraîche
cumin
currants
curry leaves (e.g., Indian cuisine)
curry powder
curry sauce
daikon
dates
dill
dumplings
endive
escarole
fenugreek
figs
fines herbes (i.e., chervil, chives, parsley, tarragon)
fish sauce, Thai
five-spice powder
galangal
garam masala (e.g., Indian cuisine)
GARLIC
GINGER: fresh, ground
Grand Marnier
grapefruit, juice
grapes and grape juice
greens
guava
ham
hazelnuts
hoisin sauce

Red beans and rice with andouille sausage is my favorite! When we opened up after the hurricane [Katrina] and were serving on paper plates, I made a roasted Tabasco chicken served with dirty rice, with the sausage stuffed in a bell pepper alongside red bean puree. For another dish, I was inspired by a diner down the street from us that had chicken and waffles on the menu, which is an old Southern dish. My take is to make a savory waffle and to add Boursin cheese with lots of herbs. Then I pair it with chicken thighs braised in a coq au vin blanc and serve it with spinach. The dish is simple, but I just love the flavors.

— BOB IACOVONE, CUVÉE (NEW ORLEANS)
Dishes
Taquitos de Pollo: Crispy Taquitos Filled with Chicken and Poblanos, with Homemade Sour Cream, Salsa Verde, Añejo Cheese, and Guacamole
— Rick Bayless, Frontera Grill (Chicago)

Chicken Braise in Black Pepper Gravy with Summer Root Vegetables, Hen o’ Woods Mushrooms, and Rosemary Cream Biscuits
— Jeffrey Buben, Vidalia (Washington, DC)

Hoffman Ranch Breast of Chicken with Chanterelles and Thyme Jus
— Traci Des Jardins, Jardinière (San Francisco)

Chicken Tagine with Olives, Preserved Lemons, and Green Peas
— Lahsen Ksayer, Casaville (New York City)

Half a Chicken Cut in Pieces and Braise in a Tequila–White Vinegar Sauce with Green Olives, Golden Raisins, and Almonds
— Zarela Martinez, Zarela (New York City)

“Southern Fried” Chicken Salad, Roasted Sweet Corn, Candied Pecans, Shaved Red Onions, and Buttermilk Ranch Dressing
— Carrie Nahabedian, Naha (Chicago)

Balsamic-Caramel Chicken with Broccoli and Walnuts
— Monica Pope, T’afia (Houston)

Roast Chicken Breast with Wild Mushrooms, Creamy Polenta, and White Truffle Oil
— Alfred Portale, Gotham Bar and Grill (New York City)

Boneless Chicken Breast in Peruvian Adobo Roasted in Our Wood-Burning Oven, Pumpkin and Mango Sauce, Ripe Plantain, and Eggplant Puree
— Maricel Presilla, Cucharamama (Hoboken, New Jersey)

Apricot Curry Chicken Salad with Fennel, Cilantro, and Dried Fruit
— Charlie Trotter, Trotter’s to Go (Chicago)

Lemon-Ghee Marinated and Grilled Specialty Chicken Breast with Roasted Garlic and Cashews
— Vikram Vij and Meera Dhalwala, Vij’s (Vancouver)

Roasted Chicken with Green Olive, Coriander, and Ginger Sauce
— Jean-Georges Vongerichten, Jojo (New York City)

honey
kale
leeks
LEMON: juice, zest
lemongrass
lime, juice
mangoes
maple syrup
marjoram
mayonnaise
mint
mirepoix
molasses
MUSHROOMS: cultivated or wild (e.g., cepes, chanterelles, morels, portobello, shiitake, white)
mustard: Dijon, dry, yellow mustard seeds
nutmeg
nuts: cashews, peanuts
OIL: canola, grapeseed, hazelnut, peanut, safflower, sesame, vegetable
OLIVE OIL
OLIVES: black, green, kalamata, niçoise
ONIONS: cipollini, pearl, red, Spanish, spring, sweet orange: juice, zest oregano pancetta paprika PARSLEY, FLAT-LEAF (garnish) parsnips peaches peanuts pears peaches: black-eyed, green PEPPER: BLACK, PINK, WHITE pesto pine nuts polenta (accompaniment) pomegranates and pomegranate molasses poppy seeds potatoes (accompaniment) prosciutto prunes raisins red pepper flakes rice ROSEMARY, fresh saffron sage SALT: fleur de sel, kosher, sea sauces, Mornay sausages, esp. spicy (e.g., andouille) savory
chicken

scallions
sesame seeds
shallots
sherry, dry (e.g., manzanilla)
sour cream
soy sauce
spinach
star anise
STOCKS: chicken, veal
sugar: brown, white (pinch)
sweet potatoes
Tabasco sauce
TARRAGON
THYME, FRESH
TOMATOES AND TOMATO
PASTE
truffles
turmeric
turnips
vanilla
vermouth
VINEGAR: balsamic, Chinese
black, cider, red wine, sherry,
tarragon, white wine
waffles
whiskey
WINE: dry to off-dry white (e.g.,
Riesling), dry red, rice, sweet
wine, vermouth
yogurt

Andrew Carmellini of New York's A Voce on Cooking Chicken as a Two-Part Process — and Applying It to Chicken Cacciatore

1. Brining: Sometimes the older techniques inspire me for deeper flavors. Many of these techniques are overlooked. Take brining, for instance. Brining has been done forever with pork chops and chicken, and for the last five years you have heard about it with turkey. The success of brining is more about the salt and it getting in there and softening the protein strands. It is less about all the other flavoring agents.

If you want to get started in your kitchen, start with a skin- and bone-on chicken breast. Grab some kosher salt, sugar, or honey as I do, some water, and brine the breast for 30 minutes. When you pull it out of the brine, rinse it, dry it, and let it sit in the refrigerator for a couple of hours so the moisture comes out. You will notice the difference in the texture. The marinated chicken — even if you overcook it — will not be dry. It is the best.

2. Marinating: The chicken on my menu right now is brined and then marinated for 24 hours. It is crazy how good the chicken becomes. The marinade is made up of roasted garlic, Sicilian oregano, red pepper flakes, lots of lemon, thyme, and olive oil. We joke that it tastes like Zesty Italian Wish-Bone Dressing. It is so delicious.

The finished dish is served with poached and sautéed artichoke, roasted pepper grilled over wood, fennel, and roasted spring onions. These vegetables are all tossed with pesto, and the dish is finished with a tomato sauce made with foamy tomato water and thyme.

Chicken Cacciatore

We opened up A Voce with chicken cacciatore on our menu and when people heard the name of the dish, they'd just yawn. A lot of times, this dish is just chicken scaloppine with peppers and tomatoes. Ours is a whole different dish: the chicken is on the bone, and brined first, which makes it nice and moist. With it, we serve a homemade peperonata with roasted peppers, onions, garlic, red pepper flakes, rosemary, fresh bay leaf, fresh thyme, and piment d'Espelette (a pepper from France with a smoky flavor). Here is a place where technique plays a role in the flavor: When you roast peppers, the best way to get the skin off is to put them in a bowl covered with plastic wrap and let them steam. When they are done, you are left with the pepper liquid. What we do is cook with that liquid.

To finish this dish, we put a big scoop of the pepper mixture, tomato sauce, garlic puree, onion, red wine vinegar, and fresh bay leaf on the chicken and put it in the oven to roast. The chicken cooks in its own juice then is served with roasted potatoes. It is delicious.

What we are doing is layering the flavors. You have the technique of brining the chicken, elevating the flavor profile of the peppers with the sweetness of the onions and herbs, adding a little heat from the piment d’Espelette, and giving body to the sauce from the pepper juice, which is distilled pepper brandy.

Flavor Affinities

chicken + andouille sausage + red beans + rice
chicken + apples + endive + walnuts
chicken + asparagus + ginger
chicken + avocado + bacon + garlic + mayonnaise + tarragon
chicken + basil + cinnamon
chicken + chanterelle mushrooms + rosemary
chicken + cloves + rosemary + yogurt
chicken + coconut + galangal + shiitake mushrooms
chicken + coriander + cumin + garlic

chicken + cream + grapefruit + pink peppercorns
chicken + cream + morels
chicken + cumin + garlic + lemon
chicken + figs + honey + thyme + dry white wine
chicken + fines herbes + mushrooms + spring onions
chicken + garlic + lemon
chicken + garlic + pancetta + sage + thyme
chicken + mustard + thyme
CHICKEN LIVERS
(See Liver, Chicken)

CHICKPEAS (aka garbanzo beans)
Season: summer
Function: cooling
Techniques: simmer

apple cider or juice
basil
bay leaf
bell peppers, esp. red
bread
butter, unsalted
cardamom
carrots
cayenne
cheese, feta
chicken
chile peppers: dried red, fresh green (e.g., jalapeño)
chives
cilantro
cinnamon
cloves
coriander
couscous
cumin, esp. toasted (e.g., Indian cuisine, etc.)
curry leaves
curry powder
fennel
fennel seeds
garam masala (e.g., Indian cuisine)
GARLIC
ginger
greens (e.g., chard, spinach)
ham, Serrano
hummus (key ingredient)
Indian cuisine
Italian cuisine (as garbanzo beans)

leeks
LEMON: juice, zest
lemon, preserved
lemon thyme
Mediterranean cuisine
Mexican cuisine
Middle Eastern cuisine
mint
OLIVE OIL
olives, black
ONIONS: RED, YELLOW
paprika, esp. smoked or sweet
parsley, flat-leaf
pasta
pepper: black, white
pork
potatoes
prosciutto
raisins
red pepper flakes
rice, esp. basmati (accompaniment)
rosemary
saffron
sage
salads
SALT, KOSHER
scallions
sesame seeds
shrimp
soup
spinach
squash, winter
stews
stocks: chicken, vegetable
tabbouleh (key ingredient)
tahini
tamarind
thyme
tomatoes
turmeric
vinegar, esp. balsamic, red wine, sherry

walnuts and walnut oil
yogurt (e.g., Indian cuisine)

Flavor Affinities
chickpeas + cayenne + garlic + lemon
juice + olive oil + salt + tahini
chickpeas + cilantro + cumin
chickpeas + garlic + lemon juice +
olive oil + thyme
chickpeas + garlic + mint
chickpeas + garlic + olive oil + parsley

CHICORY (See also Endive; Lettuces — Bitter Greens and Chicories; and Radicchio)
Season: autumn–spring
Weight: medium
Volume: moderate
Techniques: grill, raw

apples
bacon
capers
cheese, esp. Gruyère and/or fresh cilantro
crème fraîche
cumin
figs
fish, smoked
garlic
ham, Serrano
lemon
lettuces
meats and poultry, richer
nuts
olive oil
paprika, smoked
parsley
prosciutto
salads
salmon, smoked
watercress

Dishes
Preserved Lemon Hummus; Roasted Red Pepper and Walnut Puree
— Monica Pope, T'afia (Houston)

— Daniel Boulud, Daniel (New York City)
**CHILE PEPPERS — IN GENERAL**

**Season:** summer  
**Taste:** hot  
**Weight:** light-medium (from fresh to dried)  
**Volume:** moderate—very loud (from dried to fresh)  
**Techniques:** raw, roast, sauté  
**Tips:** Add at the end of the cooking process. The spiciness of chile peppers suggests “false heat.”

Asian cuisine  
avocado  
bananas  
basil  
bay leaf  
**BEANS, ESP. BLACK, PINTO**  
Cajun cuisine  
Caribbean cuisine  
cayenne  
cheese: Fontina, goat, mozzarella, Parmesan  
Chinese cuisine  
chocolate  
**CILANTRO,** esp. in Latin American cuisine

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cinnamon</th>
<th>Coconut and coconut milk, esp. in Asian cuisine</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Coriander</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Corn</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cumin</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CURRIES (key ingredient)</td>
<td>fish sauce, esp. in Asian cuisine</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eggplant</td>
<td>fruit, esp. citrus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fennel</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GINGER, esp. in Asian cuisine</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indian cuisine</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ketchup</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Latin American cuisine</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lemon, juice</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lemongrass</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lentils</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LIME, JUICE</td>
<td>mangoes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marjoram</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>MEXICAN CUISINE</strong></td>
<td>mole sauces</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mushrooms</td>
<td>mustard</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Olive oil</td>
<td>olives</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oregano</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pakistani cuisine</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parsley, flat-leaf</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peanuts, esp. in Asian cuisine</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pineapple</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rice</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rosemary</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Saffron</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Salads, esp. bean</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Salsas and other sauces</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seafood</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sesame and sesame oil, esp. in Asian cuisine</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shallots</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Southwestern American cuisine</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Soy sauce</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stews</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sweet vegetables (e.g., beets, carrots, corn)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*THAI CUISINE*  
thyme  
tomatoes and tomato sauces  
verbenia  
vinegar: balsamic, red wine, sherry  
yogurt

**Flavor Affinities**  
chile peppers + cilantro + lime
CHILE PEPPERS, ANAHEIM
Taste: hot, sweet
Weight: medium
Volume: very quiet–loud

- salads
- salsas
- stuffed peppers

CHILE PEPPERS, ANCHO (dried poblanos)
Taste: hot, sweet
Weight: medium
Volume: quiet–loud

- cashews
- chili
- sauces, esp. mole
- soups
- turkey

CHILE PEPPERS, CHIPOTLE (dried, smoked jalapeño peppers)
Taste: very hot, smoky
Weight: medium
Volume: moderate–very loud

- avocado
- beans
- Central American cuisine
- chicken
- chili
- chocolate
- cilantro
- game
- garlic
- lemon, juice
- lime, juice
- mayonnaise
- Mexican cuisine
- molasses
- olive oil
- onions
- orange, juice
- paprika
- pork
- rice

CHILE PEPPERS, GUAJILLO
Taste: hot
Weight: medium
Volume: moderate–loud

- eggs
- jicama
- lime
- pork
- sauces
- soups
- stews
- tomatoes

CHILE PEPPERS, HABANERO
Taste: very hot, sweet
Weight: medium
Volume: very loud+

- fish (e.g., snapper)
- lemon, juice
- onions
- pork
- salsas and sauces
- sugar

CHILE PEPPERS, PASILLA (dried chilacas)
Taste: hot
Weight: medium
Volume: quiet–loud

- mole
- sauces

CHILE PEPPERS, PIMENTS D’ESPELETTE
Taste: hot
Weight: medium
Volume: quiet–moderate

- cheese, French or Spanish
- French Basque cuisine
- olive oil
- Spanish Basque cuisine

CHILE PEPPERS, POBLANO
Taste: hot
Weight: medium
Volume: quiet–moderate

- chile peppers, chipotle
- chiles rellenos
- cilantro
- corn
- garlic
- onions
- salads

I have made a red-hot apple gelée that was a garnish to a panna cotta, taking apple cider and infusing it with cinnamon and jalapeño chile—which ended up tasting like red-hot candy. I like using fresh jalapeños in an infusion, or an espelette as a finishing note. I also love the idea of chipotle chile paired with chocolate ice cream.

— MICHAEL LAISKONIS, LE BERNARDIN (NEW YORK CITY)
CHILE PEPPERS, POBLANO

Taste: very hot
Weight: medium
Volume: very loud

Bloody Marys
chili powder
cilantro
coriander
cumin
garlic
molasses
oil, vegetable
olive oil
onions, yellow
orange, juice
salsas
stock, chicken
vinegar, white

CHILEAN CUISINE
(See also Latin American Cuisines)

chile peppers
corn
cumin
garlic
meats
olives
oregano
paprika
pepper, black
raisins

CHILI POWDER

Taste: hot
Weight: light
Volume: quiet–loud

cumin
Tabasco sauce
tequila

RICE

Bloodys Marys
chili powder
cilantro
coriander
cumin
garlic
molasses
oil, vegetable
olive oil
onions, yellow
orange, juice
salsas
stock, chicken
vinegar, white

CHINESE CUISINE (See also Szechuan Cuisine)

Techniques: fry, stir-fry

cabbage
chicken
chile peppers
cinnamon
duck
fish
garlic
ginger

hoisin sauce
peanuts
pork

SOY SAUCE

star anise
steaming
stock, chicken
sugar
tofu
vegetables
vinegar, rice wine
wheat (e.g., noodles), esp. in northern China
wine, rice

In Chinese cooking they have a technique called “red cooking” that is a dish braised or steamed with star anise, dark soy sauce, cinnamon, and rock sugar. I cook the oxtail for my timbale of oxtail and foie gras that way, and then clarify the broth and turn it into the aspic that holds the dish together. The foie gras is cooked separately and made into a terrine. The dish is then served with gingery pickled vegetables. It is not a Chinese dish in that it is not a dish that you would find in a Chinese restaurant, but it has Chinese influences. The idea of clarifying the broth is typically French. The use of foie gras is not very Chinese. The pickled vegetables are like something you might find in Chinese cooking, but they are done in perfect dice and served as a relish.

— DAVID WALTUCK, CHANTERELLE (NEW YORK CITY)
Flavor Affinities
- cabbage + chicken stock
- garlic + ginger + pork
- ginger + rice wine + soy sauce
- soy sauce + sugar

CHINESE FIVE-SPICE POWDER (See Five-Spice Powder)

CHIVES
Season: spring–autumn
Botanical relatives: garlic, leeks, onions, shallots
Weight: light, soft-leaved
Volume: quiet–moderate
Tips: Always use fresh, not cooked. Use in stir-fries.

- avocados
- basil
- beans, green
- butter
- CHEESE, esp. cheddar, ricotta, and cheese sauces
- chervil
- chicken
- Chinese cuisine
- cilantro
- cream and cream sauces
- cream cheese
- crème fraîche
- dill
- EGGS, EGG DISHES, AND OMELETS
- fennel
- fines herbes (ingredient, along with chervil, parsley, tarragon)
- fish

You can't cook without onions, and chives are a delicate way to get that flavor into a dish. They are good in a soup or a sauce. A chive oil is great drizzled around a plate for flavor as well as appearance.

- DAVID WALTUCK, CHANTERELLE (NEW YORK CITY)

My chocolate-corn dessert [of soft chocolate ganache and sweet corn in three textures: crunchy corn and hazelnut corn sorbet, and corn tuile] was inspired by freeze-dried corn. [The kernels] are whole with a vibrant sweetness. Corn dates back to the Aztecs, who also loved chocolate, so it's funny when people ask, "Where'd you get the inspiration?" This starts with a layer of milk chocolate hazelnut praline paste, then the corn, and then crushed wafers that give it that Kit Kat candy bar texture; on top of that is some chocolate ganache, then a layer of chocolate. To play off those flavors I serve some espelette [pepper] to give a little heat and some smoked salt from Wales. This dish is about the interplay of the chocolate and the corn. The espelette gives a heat that reminds me of roasted corn salsa. This is an ode to the origin of the inspiration.

- MICHAEL LAAKONIS, LE BERNARDIN (NEW YORK CITY)

It is hard to think of a fruit or nut that is not improved by combining it with chocolate.

- MICHEL RICHARD, CITRONELLE (WASHINGTON, DC)

I love chocolate with fruit or nuts or both. My favorite candy bar in the world is a Cadbury Fruit and Nut bar. On my menu I have a chocolate, hazelnut, and orange dessert, which is essentially a Cadbury!

- GINA DEPALMA, BABBO (NEW YORK CITY)
When it comes to chocolate, keep it simple. That's always good advice! For simplicity at its best, only two ingredients are necessary: heavy cream and chopped chocolate. Bring the cream to a boil, pour it over the chocolate, and it turns into ganache. Serve it warm with just a spoon. How can you do any better? In my new book, I feature a recipe called Cup O' Dark Chocolate, and essentially it is ganache poured into a cup. Then you grab a cookie, and have at it!

If you want to dip fruit into chocolate, dried fruits such as figs, pear, and pineapple all work really well. People always ask what they can serve to impress their sweetheart on Valentine's Day, and fresh strawberries are really nice in February. Just make a warm ganache, grab the strawberries, and start dipping. Fresh grapes are fantastic with chocolate. Dip them into the melted chocolate, pop them in the freezer, and when they are frozen, put them into a two-quart container. That way, you will always have a little treat in the freezer. Be careful though — they are not M&Ms, so they will melt in your hands!

— MARCEL DESAULNIERS, THE TRELLIS (WILLIAMSBURG, VIRGINIA)

chocolates: regular, sour, dried
chicken
chile peppers
chili powder
chocolate, white
CINNAMON
cloves
cocoa powder
coconut
*COFFEE / ESPRESSO, esp.
  with dark chocolate
cognac
Cointreau
corn syrup, light
CREAM
cream cheese
creme anglaise
creme fraiche
crust: pastry, pie
currants
custard
dates
DESSERTS
duck
espelette
figs, dried
fruit: dried, fresh
People always ask why I use bittersweet versus semisweet chocolate. Semisweet is chocolate that needs salt. When you add salt to it, it brings up the bitter flavor and makes it taste bittersweet. Semisweet chocolate to me tastes kind of flat. Milk chocolate can taste flat as well. Now that there is Scharffen Berger and El Rey on the market, I find both those chocolates to be really, really great, with both flavor and kick to them. But if you want a killer chocolate dessert, don't use milk chocolate.

When I write a dessert menu, there will be a couple of chocolate desserts, with one being a killer chocolate and the other a lighter option, like chocolate with bananas. If you don't have something intensely chocolate, chocolate lovers are very, very unhappy. Banana soufflé with chocolate is not considered a chocolate dessert. You have to be careful with a killer chocolate dessert — you can't just put chocolate, chocolate, and chocolate together. There has to be balance so the dessert is not too rich. To achieve balance, turn to coffee or caramel because they pair so well and help to intensify the chocolate flavor.

For some desserts, I like to combine white and dark chocolate, or milk and dark chocolate, to give balance and cut intensity. It sounds crazy, but you can use one chocolate to mellow the flavor of another.

I'm not a fan of herbs with dessert, with the possible exception of chocolate. I love the combination of chocolate with mint.

— EMILY LUCHETTI, FARALLON (SAN FRANCISCO)

I don't have a big sweet tooth but I do like all kinds of chocolate, from dark to white. Each one is completely different. I like the bitterness and clean flavor of dark chocolate. I like milk chocolate with a piece of bread like when I was a kid. You have to select your white chocolate carefully because not all of it is good. White chocolate works well in a mousse; it has a more neutral flavor and does not dictate. Dark chocolate is all about being the star, versus white, that is better to play with.

— GABRIEL KREUTHER, THE MODERN (NEW YORK CITY)

**Dark chocolate** goes really well with coffee or caramel, but if I could only pick one it would be the caramel! Caramel and chocolate play so well together despite both being strong flavors.

— EMILY LUCHETTI, FARALLON (SAN FRANCISCO)

---

| Flavor Matchmaking: The Charts |  |  
|-------------------------------|---|---
| Everybody is on the **chocolate** bandwagon now, and we are not far away from the proverbial "man on the street" knowing the difference between a 72 percent and a 66 percent chocolate. The boutique chocolate makers are now coming up with estate and varietal and vintage chocolates. I love that, but honestly, once you add enough sugar and cream to chocolate, those nuances are all gone. — MICHAEL LAIKONIS, LE BERNARDIN (NEW YORK CITY) |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Game (e.g., rabbit, venison)</th>
<th>Game birds</th>
<th>Ginger</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>HAZELNUTS</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Honey</td>
<td>Kirsch</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lavender</td>
<td>Lemon</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Licqueurs: berry, coffee</td>
<td>Orange</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MACADAMIA NUTS</td>
<td>Malt (malted milk)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marshmallows</td>
<td>Mascarpone</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meats</td>
<td>Mexican cuisine (e.g., mole sauces)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MILK</td>
<td>Mint</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nuts, esp. on hot chocolate</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oats</td>
<td>Orange: juice, zest</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Orange blossom water</td>
<td>Passion fruit</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peanuts/peanut butter</td>
<td>Pears</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pecans</td>
<td>Pepper: black, pink (pinch)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poultry</td>
<td>Praline</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prunes</td>
<td>Raisins</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Raspberries, esp. with milk chocolate</td>
<td>Rice Krispies</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RUM: DARK, LIGHT</td>
<td>Salt</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sauces: savory (e.g., mole), sweet (e.g., chocolate)</td>
<td>Sour cream</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strawberries</td>
<td>SUGAR: brown, confectioners', white</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tea, esp. green or Earl Grey</td>
<td>Vin Santo</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Turkey</td>
<td>Walnuts</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VANILLA</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Flavor Affinities**
- chocolate + almonds + cinnamon + sugar
- chocolate + almonds + cream
- chocolate + banana + butterscotch + macadamia nuts
- chocolate + banana + caramel + cream + vanilla
- chocolate + butterscotch + caramel + coffee
- chocolate + caramel + coffee + malt
- chocolate + caramel + coffee + praline
- chocolate + caramel + cream + hazelnuts + vanilla
- chocolate + cherries + mint
- chocolate + cinnamon + chiles + nuts + seeds
- chocolate + coffee + hazelnuts
- chocolate + coffee + walnuts
- chocolate + cream + raspberries
- chocolate + custard + pistachios
- chocolate + ginger + orange
- chocolate + graham crackers + marshmallows
- chocolate + hazelnuts + orange
- chocolate + lavender + vanilla
- chocolate + rum + vanilla

**Dishes**

- **Hot Valrhona Chocolate Soufflé, Vermont Maple Ice Cream, Vanilla Ice Cream, and Chocolate Sorbet**
  — David Bouley, Bouley (New York City)

- **Austrian Chocolate-Hazelnut Soufflé with Italian Plum Ragoût and Caramel Balsamic Ice Cream**
  — David Bouley, Danube (New York City)

- **Chocolate-Hazelnut Cake with Orange Sauce and Hazelnut Gelato**
  — Gina DePalma, pastry chef, Babbo (New York City)

- **Almond and Chocolate Torte with Raspberries**
  — Jim Dodge, at the 2005 James Beard Awards gala reception

- **Crunchy Chocolate-Hazelnut Spring Roll with Mint and Mango Salad**
  — Dominique and Cindy Duby, Wild Sweets (Vancouver)

- **Milk Chocolate and Orange Parfait with Steamed Meringues and Orange and Black Truffle Brown Butter**
  — Dominique and Cindy Duby, Wild Sweets (Vancouver)

- **Chocolate-Hazelnut Mousse, Orange Sherbet, and Cardamom-Scented Oranges**
  — Gale Gand, pastry chef, Tru (Chicago)

- **Chocolate-Port Semifreddo with Chocolate-Port Bisque, Dark Chocolate Sponge Cake, and Orange-Cinnamon Truffle**
  — Gale Gand, pastry chef, Tru (Chicago)

- **Dark Chocolate, Cashew, and Caramel Tart, with Red Wine Reduction, Banana, and Malted Rum-Milk Chocolate Ice Cream**
  — Michael Laiskonis, pastry chef, Le Bernardin (New York City)

- **Flourless Chocolate Cake, Dark Chocolate Ganache, Toasted Bread, Maldon Sea Salt, Extra-Virgin Olive Oil**
  — Michael Laiskonis, pastry chef, Le Bernardin (New York City)

- **Warm El Rey Chocolate Pudding Cake with Salted Peanut Ice Cream and Peanut Brittle**
  — Emily Luchetti, pastry chef, Farallon (San Francisco)

- **Bittersweet Chocolate Pot de Crème with Coffee-Caramel Cream, Butterscotch, and Chocolate Toffee**
  — Emily Luchetti, pastry chef, Farallon (San Francisco)

- **Chocolate-Peanut Butter Crème Caramel with Strauss Family Farms Ice Milk**
  — Ellie Nelson, pastry chef, Jardinière (San Francisco)

- **Our Marjolaine Cake: A Classic Chocolate-Hazelnut Meringue Layer Cake with Raspberries**
  — Patrick O’Connell, The Inn at Little Washington (Washington, Virginia)

- **Our Perennially Popular, Molten-Centered Chocolate Cake with Roasted Banana Ice Cream**
  — Patrick O’Connell, The Inn at Little Washington (Washington, Virginia)

- **Chocolate Biscuit Soufflé with Dark Chocolate Mousse and Milk Chocolate–Ginger Parfait**
  — François Payard, Payard Patisserie and Bistro (New York City)

- **Milk Chocolate Mousse, Yuzu Citrus Cream, and Sacher Biscuit**
  — François Payard, Payard Patisserie and Bistro (New York City)

- **Trio of Desserts: Creamy Chocolate-Cheese Flan with Hibiscus Caramel, Chocolate Bread Pudding with Warm Café con Leche Sauce, Mayan Mediterranean Chocolate Rice Pudding with Cinnamon and Cacao Nib Dust**
  — Maricel Presilla, Zafra (Hoboken, New Jersey)

- **Trio of Dark, White, and Gianduja Chocolate Mousses with an Espresso Sauce**
  — Thierry Rautureau, Rover’s (Seattle)

- **Dark Chocolate–Jalapeño Ice Cream Sundae**
  — Janos Wilder, Janos (Tucson)
I make a cake with dark cocoa, which makes for a bitter chocolate flavor, and then in the middle a milk chocolate cream. Many people don’t realize how great the chocolate flavor of cocoa is. It adds bitterness and intensity without adding richness. That is invaluable because so many chocolate desserts are so rich. Often when I make a chocolate ice cream, I will combine melted chocolate and cocoa.

— EMILY LUCHETTI, FARALLON (SAN FRANCISCO)

My dessert of milk chocolate pot de crème, caramel foam, maple syrup, and Maldon sea salt served in an emptied-out eggshell symbolizes that a few ingredients can come together in a way that is greater than the sum of their parts. The key ingredient which ties it together is the Maldon sea salt. This combination elevates all the ingredients.

Starting with chocolate, caramel was the logical next step. At the time, I played with fleur de sel, red salt from Hawaii, and others, before ending up with the Maldon. I like the concept of using sugar as a seasoning, beyond its natural necessity in dessert. I also like natural sweetness from things and maple sugar brings a lot of flavor beyond sweetness. Once I hit upon this combination, I have never changed it.

— MICHAEL LAISKONIS, LE BERNARDIN (NEW YORK CITY)

Valrhona and El Rey are both good. When you are looking for a white chocolate, you want one that has some smoothness to it. It is not going to have the acidity that dark chocolate has. When you are making a dessert with white chocolate, it is going to be a softer, smoother dessert. I don’t like dark chocolate and raspberries together, but I believe I am one of the few chefs who feel this way. What I don’t like is that when you take a bite of the chocolate with the berry, the acidity of the two don’t blend. The acids are too similar, so it doesn’t feel like a single dessert in your mouth. Instead, it is a clash with both of them bouncing into each other in your mouth. They don’t bridge, and even whipped cream doesn’t bring them together. But if you use white chocolate, its softness works much better with berries. The white chocolate complements the berries and brings out their flavors. Citrus, especially anything in the orange family, also works well with white chocolate. Nuts, such as almonds, work well with white chocolate. Spices also work well with white chocolate.

— EMILY LUCHETTI, FARALLON (SAN FRANCISCO)
CHORIZO (See also Sausages)

**Taste:** salty, spicy  
**Weight:** medium–heavy  
**Volume:** moderate–loud  
**Techniques:** sauté, stew

- apples  
- bay leaf  
- beans  
- bell peppers, roasted  
- chicken  
- chili  
- clams  
- garlic  
- hard cider  
- herbs  
- kale  
- monkfish  
- olive oil  
- onions  
- paprika  
- potatoes  
- red pepper flakes  

**Spanish cuisine**
- stews  
- stock, chicken  
- sweet potatoes  
- thyme  
- tomatoes

**Flavor Affinities**
- chorizo + clam broth + herbs + monkfish

**AVOID**
- delicate fish (e.g., halibut, scallops)  
- oily fish (e.g., sardines)

**CHRISTMAS**
- baked goods, esp. cookies  
- cinnamon  
- cloves  
- eggnog  
- fruitcake  
- ginger  
- peppermint

**CILANTRRO**

**Season:** spring–summer  
**Taste:** sweet, sour  
**Weight:** light, soft-leaved  
**Volume:** loud  
**Tips:** Always use fresh, not cooked — or, if you must, add at the very last minute. Use cilantro to provide a cooling note to chile pepper–spiced dishes.

After a visit to Spain, I created a chorizo broth to go with monkfish. I love chorizo, with its paprika flavors and the fattiness of the pork. So I had to figure out how to make a sauce out of a dried piece of sausage. We melted the chorizo in a pan for a long time, and ended up with a flavorful grease that was not that appealing. However, we emulsified it in an herb-infused clam broth, and it became velvety. It wasn't greasy, and gave the sauce a little kick. I chose this sauce to go with monkfish because it is a meaty fish and can stand up to spice and to strong flavors really well. Chorizo would not destroy the soul of the fish.

— ERIC RIPERT, LE BERNARDIN (NEW YORK CITY)

**Dishes**

**Pan-roasted Monkfish with Confit Peppers and Fiery “Patatas Bravas” with Chorizo-Albarino Emulsion**

— Eric Ripert, Le Bernardin (New York City)
I like the anise-seed quality to **cilantro**, which is really good with figs.

— MICHAEL LAISKONIS, LE BERNARDIN (NEW YORK CITY)

I really like using **cilantro** for its lemony and floral qualities, even though it’s very non-European. I’ll put cilantro stems [not the leaves] in the cavity when I’m roasting a chicken, and I find it lifts the flavor. Cilantro stems are also wonderful in Spanish-themed stews when there’s a lot of depth of flavor from ingredients like chorizo, chickpeas, oxtails, or tripe, and it needs a high note.

— TONY LII, AUGUST (NEW YORK CITY)

Love it or hate it, **cilantro** is in a lot of my dishes! I love its citrus flavor. Cilantro has long legs; we use it to make cilantro oil as well as purees. It lends itself well to white meats but I have even put it on hanger steak and wild boar. I also like it with coconut milk.

— BRAD FARMERIE, PUBLIC (NEW YORK CITY)

---

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Flavor Affinities</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>cilantro + chile peppers + coconut milk</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cilantro + dill + mint</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cilantro + garlic + ginger</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

---

**CINNAMON**

**Season:** autumn–winter

**Taste:** sweet, bitter, pungent

**Function:** heating

**Weight:** light–medium

**Volume:** loud

**Tips:** Add early in cooking.

---

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Avoid: Japanese cuisine (say some)</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>orange, juice</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>parsley</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>pork</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Portuguese cuisine</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>potatoes</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>rice, esp. Indian</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>salads, esp. Asian</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SALSAS, MEXICAN</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sauces</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>scallions</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>shellfish</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>soups</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Southeast Asian cuisine</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>soy sauce</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>stews</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>stir-fried dishes</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tamarind</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tex-Mex cuisine</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thai cuisine</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tomatoes</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>vegetables, esp. root</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vietnamese cuisine</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>vinaigrettes, esp. red wine</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>vinegar, red wine</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>yogurt</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cherries</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>chicken</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>chile peppers</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>chili powder</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chinese cuisine</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CHOCOLATE / COCOA</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>chutneys</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cloves</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>coffee / espresso</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cloves (compatible spice)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cookies</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>coriander</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>couscous</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cream and ice cream</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cream cheese</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cumin</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>curries, esp. Indian</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DESSERTS</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>eggplant</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>fennel</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>five-spice powder (key ingredient)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>French toast</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>fruits: fruit compotes, fruit desserts</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>game birds</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>garam masala, Indian (key ingredient)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>garlic</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ginger</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>holiday cooking</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>honey</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indian cuisine</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indonesian cuisine</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>lamb, esp. braised</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>lemon, juice</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mace</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>malt</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>maple syrup</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>meats, red</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meditteranean cuisine</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mexican cuisine</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middle Eastern cuisine</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mole sauces</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moroccan cuisine</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>nutmeg</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>nuts</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
I use Saigon cinnamon that is the most amazing cinnamon you will ever try. It comes in a chip [as opposed to a stick] and is like the cinnamon used to make red-hots [candy]. I use it in a ganache.

— JOHNNY IUZZINI, JEAN GEORGES (NEW YORK CITY)

onions
orange: juice, zest
pancakes
pastries
pears
pecans
pies
plums
pork
poultry
pumpkin
quail
quatre épices (key ingredient)
raisins
rais el hanout (key ingredient)
rice
saffron
sauces (e.g., barbecue)
South American cuisine
Southeast Asian cuisine (as cassia)
Spanish cuisine
squash, esp. winter
star anise
stews
stocks and broths
sugar: brown, white
tagines
tamarind
tea
tomatoes
turmeric
vanilla
veal
vegetables, esp. sweet
waffles
walnuts
wine, red, esp. mulled
yogurt
zucchini

Flavor Affinities

- cinnamon + almonds + raisins
- cinnamon + cardamom + cloves + coriander + black pepper
- cinnamon + cardamom + rice
- cinnamon + cloves + mace + nutmeg

CITRUS — IN GENERAL
(See also Lemons, Limes, Oranges, etc.)

Season: winter
Taste: sour
Weight: light-medium
Volume: medium-loud

- fish
- Greek cuisine
- lemongrass
- Mediterranean cuisine
- salads: green, fruit
- shellfish

Dishes

Lemongrass Sorbet, Dehydrated
Grapefruit, Crispy Tangerine, Lime Curd

— Johnny Iuzzini, pastry chef, Jean Georges (New York City)

CLAMS

Season: summer
Taste: salty
Weight: light
Volume: quiet—moderate

Techniques: bake, broil, deep-fry, grill, roast, sauté, steam, stew

- aioli
- allspice
- anchovy
- artichokes
- asparagus
- BACON
- basil
- bay leaf
- beans, white
- bell peppers, esp. red
- bread, esp. French
- bread crumbs
- BUTTER, UNSALTED
- cabbage, esp. napa
- capers
- carrots
- cauliflower
- caviar
- cayenne
- celery
- chervil
- CHILE PEPPERS, esp. dried and red (e.g., habanero, jalapeño)
- chili powder
- chives
- chorizo
- cilantro
- clam juice
- cocktail sauce
- cod

Orange is the leading lady of citrus — it brings a sunny, citric flavor to dishes. Lemon and lime are the men of citrus — very strong, so use them carefully!

— MICHEL RICHARD, CITRONELLE (WASHINGTON, DC)

I love candied citrus for savory dishes. I love candied kumquats, orange, or lemon. They are great with sweet or savory dishes, and amazing with cheese, such as a soft, non-ashed goat cheese.

— CARRIE NAHABEDIAN, NAHA (CHICAGO)
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Flavor Matchmaking: The Charts</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>CLOVES</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Taste:</strong> sweet, pungent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Function:</strong> heating</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Weight:</strong> medium</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Volume:</strong> loud</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Techniques:</strong> Add early in cooking.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- allspice
- almonds
- **apples:** cider, fruit, juice
- baked goods (e.g., breads, cakes, pastries, pies)
- bay leaf
- beef
- beets
- beverages
- biryani
- cabbage, esp. red
- cardamom
- carrots
- chicken
- chile peppers
- Chinese cuisine
- **chocolate**
- cider, hot (i.e., mulled)
- **cinnamon**
- cookies
- coriander
- cumin
- curries (e.g., Asian, Indian)
- desserts
- duck
- English cuisine
- fennel seeds
- fruits, esp. cooked
- game

---

**Dishes**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Linguine with Clams, Pancetta, and Hot Chiles</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>— Mario Batali, Babbo (New York City)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Clam Chowder with Smoked Bacon</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>— Rebecca Charles, Pearl Oyster Bar (New York City)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>New New England Clam Chowder Served with Cream of Bacon, Onion Jam, and Chive Oil</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>— Katsuya Fukushima, Café Atlántico / minibar (Washington, DC)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Braised Manila Clams, Italian Sausage, and White Beans</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>— Rick Tramonto, Tru (Chicago)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
garam masala (key ingredient)
garlic
German cuisine
ginger
ham, baked
honey
Indian cuisine, esp. northern
ketchup
kumquats
lamb
lemon
mace
meats
Mexican cuisine
nutmeg
onions
orange
pork
pumpkin
salad dressings
sausage
spice cakes
squash
Sri Lankan cuisine
star anise
stews
stock, esp. beef
stuffing
sweet potatoes
Szechuan pepper
tamarind
tea
tomatoes
turmeric
vegetables, sweet
walnuts
wine, red, hot (i.e., mulled)
Worcestershire sauce

Flavor Affinities
cloves + cardamom + cinnamon +
tea
cloves + cinnamon + ginger +
nutmeg
cloves + ginger + honey

cocoNUT and
cocoNUT milk
Season: autumn–spring
Taste: sweet
Function: cooling
Weight: medium–heavy
Volume: moderate–loud
Techniques: stir-fry

chillies, fresh or dried
chicken (e.g., Indian cuisine, etc.)
chili peppers, green or red
chili powder
chocolate, esp. dark or white
cilantro (e.g., Indian cuisine, etc.)
cinnamon
cloves
coriander
CREAM AND ICE CREAM
crème fraîche
cucumber
cumin
curries (e.g., Indian cuisine)
custard
dates
desserts
eggs
figs, dried
fish
fruit, esp. tropical
ginger
grapefruit
guava
honey

My coconut rice pudding strudel was the result of Takashi’s influence. 
[Takashi Yagihashi was his chef at Detroit’s Tribute restaurant.]
Dessert has to make sense in the context of the rest of the meal. Being
a pastry chef is exciting because you have a lot of autonomy, but you
are still working within the chef’s framework. Takashi’s food was very
Asian-influenced. This dish was meant to bring in Asian ingredients
in a new way yet be something familiar.

So we have rice pudding flavored with coconut, lemongrass, ginger,
and vanilla, and diced apricot for texture. At the time I was introduced
to frie de brique, which is a Moroccan dough that is like a cross
between phyllo and a wonton wrapper. I would wrap these ingredients
in this dough and then sauté them in clarified butter and slice them
like a spring roll. Alongside I served green tea ice cream. This covered
a lot of bases for me: the warm and cold temperatures, the Asian
influence, and doing something with boring old rice pudding.

The coolest compliment I ever got was from Andrew Carmellini
[chef of New York’s A Voce] who was sitting down with us and asked
about my background. When I said I used to be a line cook, he said,
“I knew it — a pastry chef would never come up with that!” It was the
combination of techniques and flavors as well as sautéing something
to order.

— MICHAEL LAISKONIS, LE BERNARDIN (NEW YORK CITY)
Indian cuisine
Indonesian cuisine
kiwi
kumquats
lamb (e.g., Indian cuisine)
lemon
lemongrass
lentils (e.g., Indian cuisine)
lime, juice
lychee
macadamia nuts
Malaysian cuisine
mangoes
maple
mascarpone
milk
mint (e.g., Indian cuisine, etc.)
nutmeg
oats
orange, juice
papaya
passion fruit
peanuts
pepper, black
pineapple
pistachios
rice
rose water
rum, esp. dark
salads, fruit
salmon (e.g., Indian cuisine)
salt, kosher
sesame seeds
shellfish: shrimp, lobster
soups
sour cream
Southeast Asian cuisine
stews

SUGAR: brown, white
sweet potatoes
tea, green
Thai cuisine
tropical fruits

VANILLA
Vietnamese cuisine
vinegar, white wine

Flavor Affinities
coconut + apricot + ginger +
green tea + lemongrass + rice +
vanilla
coconut + honey + lime
coconut + lemongrass + vanilla
coconut + orange + vanilla
coconut milk + beef + ginger

COD
Weight: medium
Volume: quiet
Techniques: bake, boil, broil,
cakes, deep-fry, fry, grill, poach,
roast, sauté, steam

anchovies
bacon
basil
bay leaf
beans: cannellini, green, navy,
white
bell peppers: red, green, yellow
bouquet garni
brandade
brandy
bread crumbs
BUTTER, unsalted
cabbage, savoy
capers
caraway seeds
carrots
cayenne
celery
cheese: Emmental, Gruyère,
Swiss
chervil
chives
cilantro
coriander
cream
currants
daikon
eggplant, esp. Japanese
eggs, hard-boiled
endive
English cuisine, esp. fish and
chips
fennel
French cuisine, esp. Provençal
garlic
ginger
ham: cured, Serrano
leeks
lemon, juice
mayonnaise
milk
miso
mushrooms, esp. cepes,
portobello, shiitake
mustard, Dijon
New England cuisine
oils: canola, corn, grapeseed,
peanut
olive oil
olives: black, green
onions
orange: juice, zest
paprika, sweet
PARSLEY, FLAT-LEAF
peas
pepper: black, white
pine nuts
POTATOES, esp. red, red bliss
prosciutto
radishes
risotto
Dishes

Ceviche Fronterizo: Lime-Marinated Alaskan True Cod with Vine-Ripe Tomatoes, Olives, Cilantro, and Green Chile, Served on Crispy Tostaditas
— Rick Bayless, Frontera Grill (Chicago)

Alaskan True Cod and Fresh-Shucked Oysters in Tamazula-Sparked Homemade Cocktail Sauce with Lime, Avocado, White Onion, and Cilantro
— Rick Bayless, Frontera Grill (Chicago)

Chatham Bay Codfish: Chanterelle Mushrooms, Sweet Peas, and Tarragon Sauce
— David Bouley, Upstairs (New York City)

Atlantic Cod "au Naturel" with Little Neck Clams; Roasted Artichokes, Swiss Chard, and Lemon Marmalade
— Daniel Boulud, Daniel (New York City)

Roast Cod on Edamame Risotto with Salt and Pepper Sepia and Carrot-Yuzu Sauce
— Brad Farmerie, Public (New York City)

Brioche-Crusted Cod with Baby Artichokes, Oven-Dried Tomatoes, Garlic Mashed Potatoes, and Artichoke Puree
— Bob Kinkead, Kinkead’s (Washington, DC)

Cod Baked in a Salt Crust Stuffed with Baby Artichokes, Romesco, Red Wine, Olive, and Preserved Tomato Stew
— Eric Ripert, Le Bernardin (New York City)

**Flavor Affinities**

**Cod, Black**

bell chile peppers, red chile peppers, esp. red chives
garlic
ginger
leeks
miso
onions
shiso
shrimp
soy sauce
sugar, brown

**Cod, Salt**

Taste: salty

Weight: medium

Volume: moderate–loud

artichoke hearts
bay leaf
beans, white
bell peppers: green, red, bread crumbs
capers
chile peppers
cilantro
cream
French cuisine, esp. Provençal

GARLIC
greens, salad
lemon, juice
marjoram
mint

**Dishes**

Black Cod with Miso Sauce
— Nobu Matsuhisa, Nobu (New York City)

Broiled Sake-Marinated Alaskan Black Cod and Shrimp Dumplings in Shiso Broth
— Hiro Sone, Terra (St. Helena, California)

**Cod** is an undervalued fish. It's light, flaky, and delicate, and I especially like it served with broths or chowders. It's also great baked for ten minutes on salt on a sheet tray. Cod pairs well with clams and shellfish, and I love the combination of fresh cod with salted cod in a dish.

— BRADFORD THOMPSON, MARY ELAINE'S AT THE PHOENICIAN
SCOTTSDALE, ARIZONA

rosemary
saffron
sage
salt: fleur de sel, kosher, sea sauces: hollandaise, tartar, tomato
sausage, chorizo
scallions
shallots
shellfish: clams, shrimp
stocks: chicken, fish, mussels, veal, vegetable
sugar
tarragon
thyme
tomatoes
truffles, black

VINEGAR: balsamic, champagne, red wine, sherry, tarragon, white wine

wine: dry white, red yuzu juice

134 The Flavor Bible
Mushrooms, and Yukon Golds

S衍 Cod, porco”, hed • ,

POI, (New York City)

PESL

cheese, ricotta
carom
chicken
cloves
COCOA
coconut
cognac
CREAM
curry
custards
dates
fennel seeds
figs
game birds
gravy
ham (e.g., with red-eye gravy)
hazelnuts
honey
ice cream, vanilla
Irish whiskey
lamb
lemon
lime
liqueurs, coffee (e.g., Kahlúa, Tía
Maria)
macadamia nuts
maple syrup
milk, including sweetened,
condensed
nutmeg
NUTS
oats
orange

COFFEE AND ESPRESSO

Taste: bitter
Weight: medium
Volume: moderate–loud

almonds
amaretto
anise
bananas
barbecue sauce
beverages
bourbon
brandy
caramel
cardamom

pears
pecans
persimmons
pork
prunes
raisins
rum
star anise
SUGAR: brown, white
VANILLA
vinegar, balsamic

AVOID
lavender

Flavor Affinities

coffee + bourbon + cream
coffee + caramel + chocolate
coffee + cinnamon + cloves +
orange
coffee + cinnamon + cream +
lemon + sugar
coffee + mascarpone + rum +
sugar + vanilla

COGNAC

apples and apple cider
beef (e.g., filet mignon)
chicken
chocolate
cream
foie gras
mushrooms
mustard, esp. Dijon
pepper: black, green
pork
prunes
raisins
turkey
vanilla
vinegar, cider

Danses

Warm Salad of Poached Salt Cod, Porcini Mushrooms, and Yukon Golds

— David Pasternak, Esca (New York City)

Old Bay seasoning
OIL, canola
olive oil
olives, esp. black or kalamata
onions
paprika: hot, sweet
parsley, flat-leaf
Pasta
pepper: black, white
potatoes
saffron
salt: kosher, sea
scallions
shallots
shrimp
sour cream
stock, fish
sugar
Tabasco sauce
thyme
tomatoes
vinegar: red wine, white wine
wine, dry
Worcestershire sauce

Flavor Affinities

salt cod + bay leaf + thyme +
white wine vinegar

Espresso Cupcakes Filled with Milk Chocolate Ganache and White Chocolate Frosting

— Emily Luchetti, pastry chef, Farallon (San Francisco)

Bourbon Ice Cream on Coffee-Flavored Tapioca in a Martini Glass

— Kaz Okochi, Kaz Sushi Bistro (Washington, DC)
In addition to seasonality, I always pay attention to temperature. I look at what I feel like eating now given that day’s weather. If it is cold and raining, I make sure soup is on the menu.

— ANDREW CARMELLINI, A VOCE (NEW YORK CITY)

COLDNESS (of indoor or outdoor temperature; See also Winter)
braised dishes
butter and butter-based sauces and dishes
cheese and cheese dishes
cream and cream-based sauces and dishes
grains, heavy
hot dishes and beverages
meats, esp. red
polenta
risotto
soup, hot and hearty
spices, warming
stews and stewed dishes

COLLARD GREENS
(See Greens, Collard)

COOLING
Function: Ingredients believed to have cooling properties; useful in hot weather.

asparagus
avocados
berries
buttermilk
cucumbers
figs, fresh
fruits, esp. sweet (e.g., cherries, grapes)
herbs, cooling (e.g., cilantro, honeysuckle, lavender, lemon balm, mint, peppermint)
lettuce
melon
salads
spices, cooling (e.g., cardamom, coriander, fennel)

water
watercress
watermelon
yogurt
zucchini

cucumbers + mint + yogurt

CORIANDER
Taste: sour, pungent, astringent
Function: cooling
Weight: light–medium
Volume: moderate–loud
Tips: Add near the end of cooking.
Toast coriander seeds to release their flavor.

allspice
anise
apples
baked goods (e.g., cakes, cookies, pies)
basil
beans
beef
cardamom
carrots
cayenne
chicken
chickpeas
chile peppers (e.g., fresh green)
chili
chutneys
cilantro
cinnamon
citrus and citrus zest
clove
coconut and coconut milk
corn
crab, esp. boiled
cumin
curries (e.g., Indian cuisine)
curry powder
desserts
eggs
fennel
fennel seeds
fish
fruits, esp. autumn and dried
garam masala (key ingredient)
garlic
ginger
gingerbread
grapefruit
ham
harissa (key ingredient)
hot dogs
Indian cuisine
lamb
Latin American cuisine
leek
mace
meats
Mediterranean cuisine
Mexican cuisine
Middle Eastern cuisine
mint
Moroccan cuisine
mushrooms

My personal preference for the ratio of coriander to cumin is three-quarters of a portion of coriander to one portion of cumin.

— MEERA DHALWALA, VIJ’S (VANCOUVER)

I’ll use coriander with peppercorns in a sachet for soups, with the pepper providing the heat and the coriander more of a fruity note.

— BRADFORD THOMPSON, MARY ELAINE’S AT THE PHOENICIAN (SCOTTSDALE, ARIZONA)
North African cuisine
North American cuisine
nuttmeg
nuts
olive oil
onions
orange: juice, zest
pastry
pears
pepper, black
pickles
plums
pork
potatoes
poultry
quince
rice (e.g., as pudding)
saffron
salmon
sausages
sesame seeds
shellfish
soaps, esp. cream-based
Southeast Asian cuisine
Southwestern cuisine
spinach
stews (e.g., chicken)
stocks (e.g., fish)
stuffing
sugar
tomatoes and tomato sauces
turkey
turmeric
Vietnamese cuisine

**Flavor Affinities**
coriander + cardamom + cinnamon + clove
coriander + cayenne + cumin + garlic
coriander + chile peppers + cumin + black pepper
coriander + cumin + curry
coriander + fish + garlic + olive oil + tomatoes

corn
**Season:** summer
**Taste:** sweet
**Function:** heating
**Weight:** medium
**Volume:** moderate
**Techniques:** boil, grill, roast, sauté, steam

bacon
BASIL: sweet, lemon
bay leaf
beans, esp. lima
béchamel sauce
beef
BELL PEPPERS: red, green
BUTTER, UNSALTED
butter milk
caraway seed
carrots
cayenne
celery
cheese: cheddar, Colby, Cotija, feta, Monterey Jack
chervil
CHILE PEPPERS: chipotle, jalapeño, serrano
chili powder
chili sauce
Chinese cuisine
chives
cilantro
clams
corn

cornmeal
crab
CREAM, esp. heavy
crème fraîche
cumin
curry powder
dill
eggs
fava beans
fennel
fish, salmon
GARLIC
ginger, fresh
harm
leeks
lemon, juice
lemon thyme
lime, juice
lobster
lovage
maple syrup
marjoram
mascarpone
Mexican cuisine
milk
mierepoix
MUSHROOMS, esp. chanterelle, oyster, shiitake, other wild
mustard
New England cuisine
nutt meg
OIL: canola, peanut, vegetable
OLIVE OIL
ONIONS: red, Spanish, yellow
oregano
pancetta
paprika
parsley
pasta
PEPPER: BLACK, WHITE
pesto
polenta
potatoes
poultry
risottos
rosemary
saffron
CORN (CONT.)
sage
salads, green
salmon
salsas
SALT: kosher, sea
scallions
scallops
shallots
sherry, dry
shiso
Southern cuisine
Southwestern cuisine
squash, esp. summer
star anise
STOCKS: chicken, vegetable
sugar
tarragon
thyme
tomatoes
tortillas, corn
vermouth
vinaigrette
vinegar: cider, white wine
wine, dry white

We participate in an event called “Plate and Pitchfork” that is held on a farm with the food from the farm. The guests sit in the field among the corn and tomatoes, and we cook a meal for them on a couple of grills. I made a corn soup for this event. We removed the husks, then cut the kernels off the cob. Then we used the husks, which produce a juice, to make a stock for the soup. If you were to use cobs, you wouldn’t get the same flavor. It is important to keep the corn flavor pure. Most cooks would throw in a bunch of vegetables in the stock, and what you’d get then is a vegetable stock with corn. I want to have a corny flavor in the end. We made a stock using the corn husks cooked with a little onion, water, and salt, and let it cook for about 45 minutes. What came out was the most amazing sweet broth. We added the corn, pureed it, and served it chilled. It was so sweet and full of corn flavor you would have sworn there were cream and sugar in it.

We now make a corn husk broth to add to a corn, chanterelle, and Dungeness crab risotto with a touch of pesto. Basil pesto and corn really speaks to me. It is a wonderful combination.

— VITALY PALEY, PALEY’S PLACE (PORTLAND, OREGON)

To intensify the flavor of corn in a dish, add [corn] juice. I’ll make a corn ravioli with pureed corn and cooked corn. I add corn juice to the filling to add a fresh corn flavor to the ravioli.

— ANDREW CARMELLINI, A VOCE (NEW YORK CITY)
**Homemade Corn and Leek Ravioli with Maine Lobster and Silver Queen Local Corn**  
— Lidia Bastianich, Felidia (New York City)

**Baby Corn on the Cob, Brown Butter Powder, Cilantro Emulsion**  
— Brad Farmerie, Public (New York City)

**Aperas de Choco: Corn Cakes Topped with Crème Fraîche and Salmon Roe**  
— Marcel Presilla, Zafra (Hoboken, New Jersey)

**Red Bliss Potato and Corn Pizza, Parsley Pesto, and Smoked Cow’s Milk Cheese**  
— Tony Schreiber, Wildwood (Portland, Oregon)

---

**Flavor Affinities**

- basil
- bell peppers, esp. red
- butter
- cabbage
- carrots
- cayenne
- chervil
- chicken
- chickpeas
- cilantro
- cumin
- fish (e.g., snapper)
- ginger
- lemon: juice, preserved, zest
- Middle Eastern cuisine
- mint
- Moroccan cuisine
- olive oil
- olives
- onions
- parsley, flat-leaf
- pepper, black
- raisins
- saffron
- salt: kosher, sea
- sausage, merguez
- scallions
- stocks: chicken, fish, vegetable, tomatoes and tomato juice
- turnips
- zucchini

**CORNED BEEF**

(See Beef — Brisket)

---

**CORNISH GAME HENS**

- cardamom
- cayenne
- cinnamon
- cloves
- cumin, esp. toasted
- garam masala
- garlic
- ginger
- lemon
- oil, canola
- onions
- paprika
- pepper, black
- salt
- tomatoes and tomato paste
- turmeric
- yogurt

**COUSCOUS**

- African (North) cuisine
- apricots, dried
- basil
- bell peppers, esp. red
- butter
- cabbage
- carrots
- cayenne
- chervil
- chicken
- chickpeas
- cilantro
- cumin
- fish (e.g., snapper)
- ginger
- lemon: juice, preserved, zest
- Middle Eastern cuisine
- mint
- Moroccan cuisine
- olive oil
- olives
- onions
- parsley, flat-leaf
- pepper, black
- raisins
- saffron
- salt: kosher, sea
- sausage, merguez
- scallions
- stocks: chicken, fish, vegetable, tomatoes and tomato juice
- turnips
- zucchini

**COUSCOUS, ISRAELI**

- olive oil
- pepper, white
- pesto
- shallots
- stock, chicken

**CRAB**

- Season: summer
- Taste: sweet
- Weight: light
- Volume: quiet
- Techniques: bake, boil, broil, grill, steam

- aioli
- apples
- artichokes
- asparagus
- *AVOCADOS
- bacon
- basil
- bay leaf
- bell peppers, esp. green, red, yellow
- bread crumbs / panko
- butter, unsalted
- carrots and carrot juice
- cauliflower
- caviar
- cayenne
- celery
- celery root
- celery salt
- chervil
- chile peppers: jalapeño, Scotch bonnet pepper, Thai chili sauce
- Chinese cuisine
- CHIVES
- cilantro
- coconut and coconut milk
- coriander
- corn
- crab roe
- cream
- crème fraîche
- cucumber
- cumin
### Dishes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dish</th>
<th>Chef(s)</th>
<th>Location</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Jumbo Lump Crab Salad with Asparagus, Mustard Seed Dressing</td>
<td>Daniel Boulud/Olivier Mulel, DB Bistro (New York City)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Crab Salad with White Asparagus, Ginger, Lime, Pistachio Oil</td>
<td>Daniel Boulud/Brionnd Chemel, Café Boulud (New York City)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marinated Jumbo Lump Crabmeat with Horseradish, Coriander, Tomato, Seaweed Salad, and Ginger Vinaigrette</td>
<td>Jeffrey Buben, Vidalia (Washington, DC)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Red and Yellow Tomato Gazpacho with Avocado Puree and Lump Crabmeat, with Microgreen Salad</td>
<td>Bob Iaconone, Cuveé (New Orleans)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A Méllange of Jumbo Lump Crab, Mango, and Avocado in a Tropical Fruit Coulis</td>
<td>Patrick O'Connell, The Inn at Little Washington (Washington, Virginia)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Signature Sushi: Blue Crab with Celery and Red Bell Pepper</td>
<td>Kaz Okoshi, Kaz Sushi Bistro (Washington, DC)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Potato Gnocchi with Oregon Dungeness Crab and Preserved Lemon</td>
<td>Vitaly Paley, Paley's Place (Portland, Oregon)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spicy Crab and Peanut Soup with Okra</td>
<td>Monica Pope, T'afia (Houston)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Crab Cake with Saffron-Sherry Aioli</td>
<td>Monica Pope, T'afia (Houston)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dungeness Crab and Potato Cakes, Green Beans, Cucumbers, Almonds, and Shaved Fennel</td>
<td>Cory Schreiber, Wildwood (Portland, Oregon)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Michael Dean's Squash Blossom, Crabmeat, and Squash with Green Tomato Relish</td>
<td>Frank Stitt, Highlands Bar and Grill (Birmingham, Alabama)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

I'll never forget tasting the combination of crab, avocado, and almonds at chef Pascal Barbot's Paris restaurant L'Astrance.

— **MICHAEL ANTHONY, GRAMERCY TAVERN (NEW YORK CITY)**

Crab is something that you typically see steamed and served with butter. King crab is intensely flavorful, meaty, and salty. When it is caught at sea, it is cooked on the boat with heavily salted water. The first thing I did was soak the crab multiple times in ice water to draw out all the salt. I saw and created a vision of this red crabmeat within a **barigoule** with perfectly cut vegetables, artichokes, French green beans, Valencia oranges, sweet garlic, and finished with olive oil.

— **CARRIE NAHABEDIAN, NAHA (CHICAGO)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ingredient</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>curry</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>custard</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>dill</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>eggplant</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>eggs</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>endive, Belgian</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>fennel</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>fish: pike, sole</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>fish sauce, Thai</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>garlic</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ginger</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>grapefruit</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>honey</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LEMON</td>
<td>juice, zest</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>lemongrass</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>lemon thyme</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>lime: juice, zest</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>lobster</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mango</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mascarpone</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MAYONNAISE</td>
<td>melon: cantaloupe, honeydew, mint</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mushrooms (e.g., button, cremini, shiitakes)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mustard, Dijon</td>
<td>mustard powder, nutmeg</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OIL</td>
<td>canola, grapeseed, peanut, sesame, vegetable</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Old Bay seasoning</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ONIONS</td>
<td>green, red, spring, sweet, white</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>orange: juice, zest</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>paprika, esp. sweet</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PARSLEY, FLAT-LEAF</td>
<td>peas, green</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PEPPER</td>
<td>black, white</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>pineapple</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>pine nuts</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ponzu sauce</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>potatoes</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>radishes</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>saffron</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SALT</td>
<td>kosher, sea</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>scallions</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sesame seeds</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
When making crab cakes, I'll use whole shrimp — the meat in the cakes, and the shrimp heads in the sauce — to intensify the shellfish flavor.

— MICHEL RICHARD, CITRONELLE (WASHINGTON, DC)

shallots
sherry, dry
shiso
SHRIMP
snow peas
sour cream
soy sauce
spinach
stocks: chicken, vegetable
sugar (pinch)
Tabasco sauce
tamarind
taragon
tartar sauce
thyme
TOMATOES: fresh, sun-dried
vinaigrette, esp. citrus
vinegar: balsamic, champagne, red wine, sherry
watercress
yogurt

Flavor Affinities

almonds
arrowroot
arugula
asparagus
avocado
bacon
basil
bell peppers, red
broccoli rabe
brown butter sauce
butter: clarified, unsalted
capers
cayenne
chervil
chile peppers, jalapeño
chili powder
chives
coleslaw
couscous, Israeli
cream
crème fraîche
cucumbers
daikon
dill
dill
fennel
garlic

CRAB, SOFT-SHELL

Season: spring–summer
Taste: sweet
Weight: light–medium
Volume: quiet–moderate
Techniques: deep-fry, grill, pan roast, sauté, tempura

ginger (e.g., pickled)
grapefruit
leeks
LEMON, JUICE
lime: juice, zest
mayonnaise
mushrooms (e.g., shiitakes)
mustard, Dijon
nori
OIL: canola, peanut, vegetable
olive oil
onions, red
orange, juice
paprika
parsley, flat-leaf
peas, sugar
PEPPER: black, white
pesto
potatoes, esp. new
rémoulade sauce
sake
SALT: kosher, sea
scallions
scallops
shallots
shiso leaf
shrimp
sorrel
soy sauce
stock, fish
Tabasco sauce

Dishes

Black and White Fettuccini with Oven-Dried Tomatoes, Almond Pesto, Calamari, and
Crisp Soft-Shell Crab
— Lidia Bastianich, Felidia (New York City)

Crispy Thai-Style Soft-Shell Crab with Green Papaya Salad and Lime Dipping Sauce
— Bob Kinkead, Kinkead’s (Washington, DC)

Pecan-Crusted Soft-Shell Crab Tempura with Italian Mustard Fruit
— Patrick O’Connell, The Inn at Little Washington (Washington, Virginia)

Soft-Shell Crab: Sweet Corn, Potatoes, Leeks, Spring Onions, Capers–White
Wine Emulsion
— Alfred Portale, Gotham Bar and Grill (New York City)

Chesapeake Bay Soft-Shell Crabs with Young Ginger and Chinese Chive Coulis
— David Waltuck, Chanterelle (New York City)
tarragon, fresh
tartar sauce
thyme
tomatoes
vinaigrette
vinegar: balsamic, champagne, white wine
wine, dry white
zucchini

**Flavor Affinities**
soft-shell crab + arugula + tartar sauce
soft-shell crab + asparagus + capers + garlic + lemon + potatoes
soft-shell crab + broccoli rabe + brown butter
soft-shell crab + cabbage + mustard
soft-shell crab + lemon + parsley
soft-shell crab + orange + parsley

**CRANBERRIES**
Season: autumn–midwinter
Taste: sour
Weight: light–medium
Volume: loud
Techniques: boil

allspice
almonds
apples
apricots
baked goods
cheese, goat
chicken
chile peppers, jalapeno
chocolate: dark, white
cinnamon
cloves
cognac
cream
cream cheese
currants
ginger
hazelnuts
honey
LEMON: JUICE, ZEST
lime, zest
liqueur, orange (e.g., Grand Marnier)
maple syrup
nuts
oats
ORANGE: juice, zest
peaches
pears
pepper
pistachios
pork
poultry
pumpkin
raisins
quince
salt
star anise
SUGAR: brown, white
sweet potatoes
tangerines
thyme
turkey
vanilla
walnuts
wine, white

**CRAYFISH (aka crawfish)**
Season: spring
Weight: light–medium
Volume: moderate
Techniques: boil, broil, steam

asparagus
avocados
bacon
basil
bay leaf
butter
Cajun cuisine
carrots and carrot juice
cayenne
celery
chervil
chives
cloves
coriander
cream / milk
Creole cuisine
dill
egg yolks
endive
fennel seeds
garlic
hazelnuts
leeks
mango
mayonnaise
mirepoix
mushrooms, morels
mustard
oil, grapeseed
olive oil
onions
orange, juice
parsley, flat-leaf
pepper, black
radishes
rice
rosemary
salt
shallots
sorrel
Tabasco sauce
tarragon
thyme
tomatoes
vinegar: tarragon, white wine
wine, dry white (e.g., white Burgundy)
zucchini

**Flavor Affinities**
crayfish + asparagus + morel mushrooms
crayfish + carrot juice + orange juice

**Dishes**

*Crayfish, Beet, Leek, and Bacon Salad with Mustard Vinaigrette*

— Daniel Boulud, at the 2003 James Beard Awards gala reception
CREAM CHEESE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Taste</th>
<th>Sour</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Weight</td>
<td>Heavy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Volume</td>
<td>Loud</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Flavors | Cinnamon, ginger, cloves, apples, cream, crème fraîche, desserts, eggs, fruit, dried, ginger, graham cracker crumbs, honey, kiwi fruit, LEMON: JUICE, ZEST, liqueur, orange (e.g., Grand Marnier), maple syrup, mascarpone, nutmeg |

CREAM

When you eat a piece of pumpkin pie, the whipped cream is the first thing you go for! You can take this for granted in desserts, or you can dig deeper. You can think of cream as its own flavor. When I was in Japan, the cream was miles better than here in the U.S. You also need to think about your dairy choice in relation to the country. In India, everything is centered around reduced milk. The counterpart would be dolce de leche in Latin cuisine. I love yogurt because it is simple and complex; it can be in the forefront or in the background.

— MICHAEL LAISKONIS, LE BERNARDIN (NEW YORK CITY)

CREAM, SOUR

(See Sour Cream)

CRÈME FRAÎCHE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Taste</th>
<th>Sour</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Weight</td>
<td>Medium-heavy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Volume</td>
<td>Loud</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Flavors | Allspice, cumin, garlic, orange juice, pork, avocado, onions, pineapple, plantains, pork, rice, seafood (crab, fish, lobster, shrimp), sugar, white, watercress |

CREOLE CUISINE

bouillabaisse, cayenne, crawfish, okra, onions, oysters, paprika, pepper: black, white, salt, seafood, shrimp rémoulade

CREMA (See Watercress)

CUBAN CUISINE

allspice, avocado, bay leaf, beans, beef, bell peppers, chicken, chocolate, citrus (e.g., lime, orange), cumin, garlic, lime, olive oil, onions, esp. white, orange, esp. white, oregano, pineapple, plantains, pork, rice, seafood (crab, fish, lobster, shrimp), sugar, white, watercress

| Flavors | Allspice + cumin + garlic + orange juice + pork, avocado + onions + pineapple + watercress, bay leaf + green bell peppers + garlic + onions + oregano (aka safrito), chocolate + garlic + olive oil, citrus juice + garlic + olive oil (aka adobo) |

Your choice of sugar suggests a country of origin. For example, Cuban cuisine relies on white sugar, while Mexican cuisine relies on brown sugar.

— MARICEL PRESILLA, ZAFRA (HOBOKEN, NEW JERSEY)
CUCUMBERS
Season: spring-summer
Taste: sweet, astringent
Function: cooling
Weight: light
Volume: quiet
Techniques: pickle, raw, salads, sauté, soups

- allspice
- bell peppers, esp. green
- basil
- butter
- buttermilk
- caraway seeds
- cayenne
- celery and celery seeds
- cheese: blue, feta
- chervil
- chile peppers: fresh green, jalapeño
- chives
- cilantro
- coconut milk
- coriander
- cream
- cream cheese
- crème fraîche
- cumin
- DILL
- fish
- fish sauce, Thai or other Asian
- frisée
- garam masala
- GARLIC
- gin
- Greek cuisine
- horseradish
- Japanese cuisine
- jicama
- lemon balm
- lemon, juice
- lime, juice
- melon, esp. honeydew
- MINT (e.g., Indian cuisine)
- mustard, Dijon
- oil: sesame, vegetable
- olive oil
- ONIONS, esp. green or red
- oregano
- parsley, flat-leaf
- peanuts
- pepper: black, white
- pineapple
- romaine
- red pepper flakes
- salads
- salmon
- salt: kosher, sea
- scallions
- scallops
- sesame seeds
- shallots
- shrimp
- smoked salmon
- soups, chilled (e.g., gazpacho)
- sour cream
- soy sauce
- sprouts
- sugar (pinch)
- Tabasco sauce
- tamari
- tarragon
- tea sandwiches
- thyme
- tomatoes
- Vietnamese cuisine
- vinaigrettes
- VINEGAR: balsamic, champagne,
- cider, red wine, rice wine,
- sherry, tarragon, white wine
- vodka
- watercress
- wine, white
- YOGURT (e.g., Indian cuisine)

CUMIN
Taste: bitter, sweet
Function: heating
Weight: medium
Volume: moderate-loud
Tips: Add early in the cooking process.
Toast cumin seeds in a dry pan to evaporate their moisture and increase their flavor.

- allspice
- anise
- apples
- baked goods (e.g., breads)
- bay leaf
- beans, esp. black or kidney
- beef
- beets
- bread (e.g., rye)
- cabbage
- caramel
- cardamom
- carrots
- cayenne

Flavor Affinities
- cucumber + chervil + salt + vinegar
- cucumber + chile peppers + mint + yogurt
- cucumber + cilantro + ginger + sugar + rice vinegar
- cucumber + dill + red onion + sour cream + vinegar
- cucumber + dill + salmon
- cucumber + dill + yogurt
- cucumber + feta cheese + garlic + mint + olive oil + oregano + red wine
- cucumber + garlic + mint + yogurt
- cucumber + lemon + sesame oil + vinegar
- cucumber + jalapeño chile + dill + onion
- cucumber + mint + yogurt
With lighter dishes like rice pilaf or lentils, I use cumin seeds for their gentler flavor. With heavier dishes like chickpeas, kidney beans, or red meat, I’ll use the stronger-flavored cumin powder.

— MEERU DHALWALA, VIJ’S (VANCOUVER)

pepper
pork
Portuguese cuisine
potatoes
rice
saffron
salads, esp. pasta, tomato
salmon
sauces (e.g., mole)
sauerkraut
sausages
shellfish
soups (e.g., black bean)
Spanish cuisine
squash
stews
sugar, palm
Tabasco sauce
tahini
tamarind
tequila
Tex-Mex cuisine
Thai cuisine
thyme
tomatoes
tuna
turmeric
vegetables, esp. summer
Vietnamese cuisine
yogurt

Flavor Affinities

cumin + cayenne + coriander + garlic
cumin + chickpeas + yogurt
cumin + cinnamon + saffron
cumin + palm sugar + tamarind
cumin + tomatoes + turmeric

CURRY LEAVES

Taste: sour, bitter
Weight: light
Volume: quiet–moderately loud
Tips: Add later in cooking, or to finish a dish.

allspice
Asian cuisines
bread, esp. Indian (e.g., naan)
cardamom
chile peppers
cilantro

cinnamon
cloves
coconut
coriander
cumin
curries, esp. Indian
fennel seeds
fenugreek seeds
fish
garlic
ginger

Indian cuisine
lamb

lentils
mustard seeds
paprika
peas
pepper
rice

shellfish
soups
stir-fried dishes
stocks
tamarind
turmeric
vegetables

CURRY POWDER AND SAUCES

Taste: bittersweet, pungent
Weight: medium–heavy
Volume: moderate–loud
Tips: Add early in cooking process.
beef  
butter  
cardamom  
cashews  
cayenne  
cheese  
chicken  
chile peppers, red  
cilantro  
cinnamon  
cloves  
coconut  
coriander  
cream  
crème fraîche  
cumin  
dill  
eggs and egg salad  
fennel  
fish  
garlic  
ginger  
Indian cuisine  
lemon, zest  
lemongrass  
lime, juice  
mace  
mayonnaise  
mushrooms  
nutmeg  
oil, vegetable  
onions  
paprika  
pepper: black, red  
potatoes  
saffron  
salads (e.g., chicken, egg, potato)  
salt, kosher  
sauces  
sHELLfish  
soups, esp. fish, pea  
star anise  
stews, meat  
stocks: chicken, fish  
tamarind  
Thai cuisine  
tomatoes  
tuna  
turmeric  
vegetables  
zucchini  

CUSTARDS  
Weight: medium–heavy  
Volume: quiet

almonds  
aples  
apricots  
bananas  
berries  
caramel  
ch  
cherries  
chocolate, esp. dark or white  
cinnamon  
coconut  
coffee  
ginger  
hazelnuts  
lemon  
liqueurs: nut, orange  
mango  
maple syrup  
nutmeg  
orange  
passion fruit  
pears  
persimmons  
pineapple  
plums  
prunes  
pumpkin  
quince  
raisins  
raspberries  
rhubarb  
strawberries  
sweet potatoes  
thyme  
vanilla  
walnuts  
wine, sweet  

DAIKON  
Season: autumn–winter  
Taste: sweet  
Weight: light  
Volume: quiet–moderate  
Techniques: braise, marinate, raw (e.g., julienned), stew, stir-fry

basil  
beef  
beets  
butter  
cabbage  
carrots  
celery root  
cheese, feta  
chives  
cream  
cream cheese  
cucumbers  
curry powder  
dill  
duck  
fish  
ginger  
honey  
lemon, juice  
lovage

Torrijas, which means “soaked,” are a [custardy] dessert in the Basque country that are like French toast or pain perdu. We soak the bread until it is saturated in milk, then let it sit [in the refrigerator] overnight. The next morning before serving, we coat it in egg and then fry it. We serve our version of torrijas with poached apples and instead of serving it with maple syrup, we serve it with Pedro Ximenez [a rich, sweet, Spanish sherry] syrup that has a raisin-like quality to it. The PX is just warmed and has a little glucose added to thicken it into a syrup. I don’t cook it or reduce it because I want to keep the alcohol in the syrup so it doesn’t become overly cloying.

— ALEXANDRA RAIJ, TÍA POL (NEW YORK CITY)
Daikon is great in stews and is milder, sweeter, and more absorbent than turnips or radishes. Duck and turnips is a classic, but I like duck with daikon even better. It pairs well with other heavier flavors, such as pork or beef.

— TONY LIU, AUGUST (NEW YORK CITY)

marjoram  mint  miso  oil, sesame  onions, esp. green  orange, juice  oregano  parsley  pork  salmon  scallions  soups  sour cream  soy sauce  sugar  sugar snap peas  tamari  thyme  tuna  vinegar

DANDELION GREENS
(See Greens, Dandelion)

DATES

almonds  apples  apricots  Armagnac  bacon  bananas  brandy  butter, unsalted  buttermilk  cakes  caramel  CHEESE, esp. Brie, Explorateur, Parmesan, pecorino, ricotta, Roquefort cherries, dried chicken chives chocolate, esp. dark or white cinnamon coconut coffee couscous cranberries, dried cream and ice cream cream cheese crème fraîche currants desserts figs ginger hazelnuts honey lamb lemon lime macadamia nuts maple syrup mascarpone Middle Eastern cuisine Moroccan cuisine nuts oats orange blossom water ORANGE: juice, zest pecans pepper, black pistachios prunes quince raisins rosemary rum

Dishes
Chocolate and Date Pudding Cake  — Gina DePalma, pastry chef, Babbo (New York City)
Baked-to-Order Date Pudding with a Caramelized Rum Sauce and a Dollop of Freshly Whipped Cream  — Toshi Sakihara, Etats-Unis (New York City)
Medjool Dates Stuffed with Chorizo, Wrapped in Bacon  — Monica Pope, T’afia (Houston)
Medjool Dates with Maple Mascarpone, Pistachios, and Orange Blossom Water  — Monica Pope, T’afia (Houston)

Someone told me about a savory date dish they had but could only remember that it was stuffed and wrapped in bacon. This led me into the kitchen to stuff a date with chorizo, wrap it in bacon, and then add charmoula [typically made of paprika, cayenne pepper, cumin, garlic, lemon juice, parsley, cilantro, and olive oil]. The dish just hits the mark. I also serve a sweet date dish that I stole from Judy Rodgers of Zuni Café. My version is made with Medjool dates that have maple mascarpone smeared in, pistachios crumbled on top, and orange blossom water. The orange blossom water gives people a visceral reaction because you don’t see it, but you taste it. When people have the dish, they lick their fingers trying to figure it out!

— MONICA POPE, T’AFIA (HOUSTON)
DESSERTS
Tips: Sweetness satiates the appetite, so generally end a meal on a sweet note. Even sweet desserts should be in balance (their acidity, saltiness, etc.). Dessert wine should always be sweeter than the dessert it accompanies.

DILL
Season: spring–autumn
Taste: sour, sweet
Weight: light, soft-leaved
Volume: moderately loud
Tips: Always use dill fresh, not cooked.

asparagus
avocados
basil
beans, esp. fava or green
beef
beets
breads, esp. rye
broccoli
cabbage
capers
carrots
cauliflower
celery root
cheese: cheddar, cottage, goat, soft
chicken
chives
cilantro
coriander
corn
crayfish
cream cheese
cream sauces
crème fraîche
CUCUMBERS
eggplant
EGGS AND EGG DISHES
(e.g., omelets)
European cuisines
FISH, esp. whole
garlic
German cuisine
Greek cuisine
green beans
halibut
horseradish
lemon balm
lemon thyme
lovage
meats, e.g., lamb
Mediterranean cuisine
Middle Eastern cuisine
mint
mushrooms
mustard
North American cuisine
onions
parsley
parsnips
peas
PICKLES (key ingredient)

POTATOES AND POTATO SALAD
poultry
rice, esp. pilaf
Russian cuisine
salads and salad dressings
salmon
salmon, cured (key ingredient)
salmon, smoked
sauces
scallops
Scandinavian cuisine
shellfish

dill

Asian cuisines

sugar: brown, white
thyme
vanilla
walnuts
wine: red, sweet

Flavor Affinities
dates + caramel + vanilla + walnuts
dates + chocolate + walnuts
dates + cream + rum
dates + maple syrup + mascarpone + pistachios
dates + orange + walnuts

Dill adds a certain freshness and cleanness to a dish. During the winter, most of my fish dishes have dill — as well as dishes like goulash with noodles, which is served with both chives and dill for their herbal freshness.

— TONY LIU, AUGUST (NEW YORK CITY)
shrimp
sole
soup, esp. potato
sour cream and sour cream
sauces
spinach
squash
TOMATOES AND TOMATO
JUICES
trot
Turkish cuisine
veal
vegetables
YOGURT AND YOGURT
SAUCES
zucchini

Flavor Affinities
dill + cilantro + mint
dill + cucumber + salmon

DUCK
Season: autumn
Weight: heavy
Volume: moderate–loud
Techniques: braise (esp. legs),
   grill (esp. breast), roast, sauté,
   stir-fry

allspice
APPLES, esp. Granny Smith
apricots (sauce)
arichokes
arugula
bacon
basil
bay leaf
beans, fava
blueberries
bok choy
butter, unsalted
cabbage: green, red
caraway seeds
cardamom
carrots
celery
celery root
cheese: Asiago, Parmesan,
   pecorino, ricotta

Dishes
Duck, Butternut Squash, and Banana with Thai Flavors
   — Grant Achatz, Alinea (Chicago)
Liberty Farms Duck Breast with Smoked Bacon, Savoy Spinach, and Pickled Mulberries,
   Ginger Consommé
   — Traci Des Jardins, Jardinière (San Francisco)
Roast Duck Breast, Bok Choy, and Cassava Chips with Sesame Soy Dressing and
   Pickled Chiles
   — Brad Farmerie, Public (New York City)
Duck with Tomato, Red Chile, and Dried Mixed Fruits
   — Zarela Martinez, Zarela (New York City)
Blossom Honey “Lacquered” Aged Moulard Duck Breast, Caramelized Quince and
   Fennel, Broccoli Rabe, Sicilian Pistachios, and Port
   — Carrie Nahabedian, Naha (Chicago)
Grilled Duck Breast with Creamy Farro, Spring Onion, and Sour Cherry Jus
   — Peter Nowakowski, Rat's (Hamilton, New Jersey)
Braised Duck Legs on Wilted Watercress in an Aromatic Asian Broth
   — Patrick O’Connell, The Inn at Little Washington (Washington, Virginia)
Cured Duck Meat with a Salad of Licorice-Scented Fennel Shavings and Blood Orange
   — Monica Pope, T’afia (Houston)
Drake Duck “Sirloin” with Roasted Sweet Potatoes and Port Wine Sauce
   — Monica Pope, T’afia (Houston)
Duck Breast with Fava Beans and Roasted Plums
   — Alfred Portale, Gotham Bar and Grill (New York City)
Grilled Duck Breast over Aromatic Tamarillo Sauce, Creamy Quinoa,
   and Sweet Potato Puree
   — Maricel Presilla, Cucharamama (Hoboken, New Jersey)
Moulard Duck Breast with Parsnips, Wild Mushrooms, and a Rosemary Sauce
   — Thierry Rautureau, Rover’s (Seattle)
Muscovy Duck Breast with Rainier Cherries, Pecans, and Garden Lettuces
   — Judy Rodgers, Zuni Café (San Francisco)
Charcoaled Duck with Walnuts, Confit Leg, and Apricots Baked in Brown Sugar Brioche
   — Lydia Shire, Locke-Ober (Boston)
Grilled Liberty Farm Duck with Duck-Liver Wontons in Wild Mushroom Sauce
   — Hiro Sone, Terra (St. Helena, California)
Grilled Duck Breast in Lime Leaf Curry with Ginger, Jalapeño Basmati Rice
   — Vikram Vij and Meera Dhalwala, Vij’s (Vancouver)
Spit-Roasted Duck with Quince Sauce
   — Alice Waters, Chez Panisse (Berkeley, California)
Our paella made with duck confit, foie gras, and morels is in honor of [the late chef] Jean-Louis Palladin. We made a paella with the fat from the duck and morels, and to finish it we topped it with thin slices of raw foie gras. The foie gras would get warm from the hot rice and melt into the rice. It is an amazing paella!

— JOSE ANDRES, CAFE ATLANTICO (WASHINGTON, DC)

Duck is great with fruit. We serve a duck with Seville oranges that are a little bitter. We made a puree of the pulp and a little peel that had nice acidity and bitterness. We then added fennel that had been cooked with butter and a little star anise.

— DANIEL HUMM, ELEVEN MADISON PARK (NEW YORK CITY)

For my dish of lacquered duck and peppercress, I make a duck cooked with honey served with a brown butter—honey that gives the duck a sweet, nutty flavor. To cut the sweetness, I added a reduction of pomegranate juice and oil emulsion to give the dish a tart contrast.

— BOB IACOVONE, CUVEE (NEW ORLEANS)

marjoram
Mediterranean cuisine
mint
mirepoix
morels
MUSHROOMS, ESP. WILD
  (esp. porcini or shiitake)
mustard, Dijon
nutmeg
nuts, macadamia
OIL: canola, grapeseed, peanut, sesame, vegetable
olive oil
olives, esp. green
ONIONS, esp. green, sweet
ORANGE: juice, zest
pancetta
parsley, flat-leaf
pasta
peaches
pears
peas
PEPPER: black, green, pink, white
plums: fruit, sauce
pomegranates
poppy seeds
port
potatoes
prunes
raspberries
red pepper flakes
rice, esp. basmati, wild
risotto
rosemary
sage
sake
SALT: fleur de sel, kosher, sea
sauerkraut
scallions
sesame seeds: black, white
shallots
sherry
SOY SAUCE
spinach
squash, butternut
star anise
STOCKS: chicken, duck, game, meat, turkey
stuffing
SUGAR: brown, white
sweet potatoes
Tabasco sauce
tamarind
tarragon, fresh
teriyaki sauce
Thai cuisine
thyme, fresh
We serve a sixteen-ounce duck breast with a Pinot Noir, blackberry, and ginger sauce. The sauce is made from frozen Oregon blackberries, which I am not shy to admit I use, because eleven months out of the year, there is nothing better. At home, I make a version of this sauce with currant preserves: I sauté the duck, then add lots of fresh ginger and shallots, a few tablespoons of currant preserves, and some champagne vinegar to cut the sweetness.

—MICHAEL LOMONACO, CHEF, PORTER HOUSE NEW YORK (NEW YORK CITY)

Duck Confit: Wild Mushrooms, Red Swiss Chard, Sweet and Sour Duck Jus

—Olivier Muller, DB Bistro Moderne (New York City)
pepper, black potatoes rice sour cream sugar tomatoes veal vegetables, root vinegar

**Flavor Affinities**
beef + cabbage + rice beets + dill + sour cream cabbage + caraway + vinegar chicken + cream + paprika noodles + caraway seeds + sour cream

**Eggplant**
Season: summer
Taste: bitter
Weight: medium-heavy
Volume: moderate
Techniques: bake, boil, braise, broil, deep-fry, grill, roast, sauté, steam, stir-fry, stuff

allspice anchovies artichokes basil bell peppers, esp. green, red bouquet garni bread, pita bread crumbs cabbage, green capers cashews cayenne

**CHEESE**: Emmental, feta, goat, Gruyère, mozzarella, Parmesan, ricotta, ricotta salata, Romano, Swiss chickpeas chile peppers, esp. fresh green chili powder

**Dishes**

- **Grilled Eggplant Terrine with Red Bell Pepper and Italian Parsley Sauce**
  — David Bouley, Bouley (New York City)

- **Eggplant Ravioli with Medallions of Maine Lobster and Tomato-Basil Butter**
  — Patrick O’Connell, The Inn at Little Washington (Virginia)

- **Baba Ghanoush Soup, Made with Eggplant, Tahini, Tomato Water, Garlic, and Cumin**
  — Michel Richard, Citronelle (Washington, DC)

- **Eggplant, Peas, and Paneer in Pomegranate-Cinnamon Masala with Raita and Chapati**
  — Vikram Vij and Meenu Dhalwala, Vij’s (Vancouver)
Eggplant is funny. It is a subtle vegetable that can work with strong herbs like rosemary or marjoram.

— JERRY TRAUNFELD, THE HERBFARM (WOODINVILLE, WASHINGTON)

Eggplant can take on an even richer, meatier flavor when it’s enhanced with miso or tahini.

— BRAD FARMERIE, PUBLIC (NEW YORK CITY)

My eggplant gazpacho really tastes like a baba ghanoush soup. We start the soup by roasting eggplant and onions. Then we blend this together with tahini, tomato water, buttermilk for acidity, lemon, and garlic. The soup is garnished with three gels made of eggplant, lemon, and onion — all flavors from the soup. I love texture — people joke with me and call me “Captain Crunch” — so at the last second, we top the soup with Rice Krispies.

— MICHEL RICHARD, CITRONELLE (WASHINGTON, DC)
EGGS AND EGG-BASED DISHES — IN GENERAL
Taste: sweet, astringent
Function: heating
Weight: light-medium
Volume: quiet
Techniques: bake (frittata, quiche, etc.), boil (soft or hard), fry, poach, scramble

asparagus
bacon and pancetta
basil
bell peppers, esp. green
bread
butter
capers
caviar
cheeses: Comté, Emmental, feta, Gruyère, Havarti, mozzarella, Parmesan, Roquefort
chervil
chives
chorizo
cream
cream cheese
crème fraîche
dill
garlic
ginkgo nuts
ham: Serrano, Virginia
herbs, esp. fines herbes (i.e., chervil, chives, parsley, tarragon)
leeks
marjoram
mushrooms
olive oil
onions
parsley, flat-leaf
pepper: black, white
potatoes
salmon, smoked
salt: kosher, sea
sausage
scallions

Dishes
Frittata with Zucchini and Parmesan Cheese, with Arugula Salad
— Andrew Carmellini, A Voce (New York City)
Poached Eggs with Crispy Polenta and Tomato Hollandaise
— Andrew Carmellini, A Voce (New York City)
Warm Salad of Greens with Pancetta and Scrambled Eggs
— Cesare Casella, Maremma (New York City)
Organic Egg Frittata with Mushrooms, Zucchini, and Gruyère
— Daniel Humm, Eleven Madison Park (New York City)
Organic Farm Egg Omelet with Capriole Farms Goat Cheese, Oranges, and Citrus Hollandaise, Toasted Ciabatta, and Apple Butter
— Carrie Nahabedian, Naha (Chicago)
Organic Farm Egg and Wood-Grilled Spanish Sausage with a Salad of Italian Frisée, Smoked Red Thumb Potatoes, French Breakfast Radishes, Sweet Garlic, and Herbs
— Carrie Nahabedian, Naha (Chicago)
Organic Scrambled Egg with a Lime Crème Fraîche and White Sturgeon Caviar
— Thierry Rautureau, Rover’s (Seattle)
Traditional Eggs Benedict, Shaved Canadian Bacon, Lemon-Thyme Hollandaise, and Truffle Pesto
— Nori Sugie, Asiate (New York City)
Smoked Chicken, Roasted Bell Pepper, Artichoke, and Fontina Cheese Omelet
— Nori Sugie, Asiate (New York City)

I like frittata as a main course at lunch or dinner. You can simply have frittata with a soup, and it's a meal. Frittata is like a risotto in its versatility; you can go crazy with it and add almost anything to them. I love my frittata with vegetables; asparagus, artichokes, mushrooms, onions, zucchini all work. With any variety of vegetables I would add some fresh herbs and cheese. Since the eggs are the protein, the only thing I don't personally care for in my frittata is meat, or maybe pickled vegetables.
— ODETTE FADA, SAN DOMENICO (NEW YORK CITY)

We will serve the combination of poached egg and spring asparagus differently at brunch versus dinner. At brunch, we will serve sliced asparagus mixed with other sliced vegetables in the bottom of a cazuela [clay pot] with the poached egg on top. For dinner, it will be green market asparagus topped with a poached egg and anchovy butter.
— ALEXANDRA RAJ, TÍA POL (NEW YORK CITY)
shallots
sorrel
spinach
tarragon
thyme
tomatoes
truffles

AVOID
cranberries

**Flavor Affinities**

eggs + bacon + cheese + onions
eggs + bacon + crème fraîche + onions (Alsatian)
eggs + beets + smoked whitefish (Yiddish)
eggs + cheese + mushrooms + thyme
eggs + kale + pinkelwurst (oatmeal sausage) (Berliner)
eggs + mozzarella cheese + tomatoes (Roman)
eggs + mushrooms + red wine (Bordelaise)
eggs + potato + sausage

**EGGS, FRITTATA**

anchovies
artichokes
arugula
asparagus
bacon and pancetta
basil
bell peppers
cheese: feta, Gruyère, Havarti, mozzarella, Parmesan
chives
herbs
Italian cuisine
mushrooms
olives
onions
pepper, black
salt, esp. kosher
sausage
shallots
thyme
tomatoes
zucchini

**EGGS, HARD-BOILED**

*Techniques:* chop, devil, halve, sieve, slice

almonds
basil
butter, unsalted
cayenne
chile peppers, jalapeño
chives
cilantro
cream
curry
dill
garlic
ginger, pickled
leeks
mayonnaise
mint
mustard: Dijon, dry
olive oil
paprika
parsley, flat-leaf
pepper, black
salmon
salt, kosher
sauce, béchamel
scallions
shallots
sour cream
Tabasco sauce
tarragon
tomatoes

**ENDIVE**

*Season:* winter–spring
*Taste:* bitter, sweet
*Weight:* light
*Volume:* quiet–moderate
*Techniques:* braise, glaze, grill, raw, roast

almonds
anchovies
apples
arugula
avocado
Dishes

Cabbageless Sauerkraut: Pickled Onions, Fennel, Endive, and Green Apple
— Christopher Lee, Gilt (New York City)

Endive Tips with Red Pepper Puree, Maple Molasses, and Candied Walnuts
— Monica Pope, T'afia (Houston)

Endive and Grapefruit Salad with Honey Dressing and Toasted Pecans
— Monica Pope, T'afia (Houston)

Belgian Endive Salad, Shredded Carrot and Apple Salad, Concord Grapes, Sonoma Verjus Vinaigrette
— Nori Sugie, Asiate (New York City)

People shy away from endive because of its bitterness. But a good chef will pair it with a sweet dressing.
— CARRIE NAHABEDIAN, NAHA (CHICAGO)

flavor: bitter

Weight: light-medium

Volume: moderate-loud

Beans, esp. black
Bell peppers
Caribbean cuisine
Central American cuisine
Chile peppers
Chorizo
Cilantro
Cloves
Cumin
Fish

ENGLISH CUISINE
Cheese: Cheddar, Stilton cream
Fish (and chips)
Game
Jams and preserves
Lamb
Mutton
Oats
Peas
Puddings (e.g., Yorkshire)
Roast beef
Scones
Tea
Tea sandwiches
Worcestershire sauce

Taste: bitter

Weight: light-medium

Volume: moderate-loud

Beans, esp. black
Bell peppers
Caribbean cuisine
Central American cuisine
Chile peppers
Chorizo
Cilantro
Cloves
Cumin
Fish
I have always loved to mix meat and fish in a very delicate way. I went to Cut [Wolfgang Puck's steak restaurant] and had my first true Kobe beef steak. I begged Lee [Hefter, the chef] for his source! Surf and turf is not as much about having a piece of meat and fish on the plate as about the ideas they create for flavor combinations. The Kobe beef triggered everything. I can't serve steak at a fish restaurant, but the Kobe was so good I had to find a way to justify it on the menu. I came up with Kobe beef and escalar, with a brown butter that is classic with the fish. The final dish was inspired by having Korean barbecue at a friend's house, which is when I realized how to bring it together.

I wanted another element in the dish because the Kobe, escalar, and brown butter are all rich and all soft. The dish also has squash, Japanese pears, and napa cabbage marinated like Korean kimchee for just a moment. These elements add contrast, chewiness, and crunchiness. — ERIC RIPERT, LE BERNARDIN (NEW YORK CITY)

garlic
goat
Latin American cuisines
legumes
lime
Mexican cuisine
mole sauces
mushrooms
onions
oregano
paprika
pepper
pork
rice
salsas
shellfish
soups
squash
tomatillos
vegetables, green

**ESCALAR**
brown butter
Kobe beef

**Flavor Affinities**
escalar + Kobe beef + brown butter

**ESCAROLE**
Season: year-round
Taste: bitter
Weight: medium

**Volume:** moderate–loud
**Techniques:** braise, grill, roast

almonds
anchovies
beans
beef
butter

**cheese:** Fontina, Gruyère, mozzarella, Parmesan, Roquefort

chile peppers, dried red cream
cumin
fish
garlic
hazelnuts
lemon

**olive oil**
olives, black
onions
paprika, sweet
parsley

**pepper:** black, white
pork
poultry
red pepper flakes
salt, kosher

**Flavor Affinities**
escalar + apples + Cheddar cheese
escalar + olive oil + shallots

**ETHIOPIAN CUISINE**

beef, raw or stewed
injera
spices
stewed dishes
vegetables, stewed
wine, honey

**EUROPEAN, EASTERN CUISINES** (See Eastern European Cuisines)

**FALL** (See Autumn)

**FENNEL**
Season: year-round
Taste: sweet
Weight: light

**Volume:** quiet

**Techniques:** boil, braise, fry, grill, raw, roast, sauté, steam

almonds
anise
apples
arugula
asparagus
basil
bay leaf
beets: vegetable, juice
bell peppers

**BUTTER, UNSALTED**
carrots

**Flavor Matchmaking:** The Charts
Dishes

Wild Fennel and Ramp Soup with Broken Capellini and Alaskan King Crab
— Lidia Bastianich, Felidia (New York City)

Braised Fennel Salad with Pears and Gorgonzola
— Mario Batali, Babbo (New York City)

Puree of Fennel Soup with Apples, Almonds, and Madras Curry
— Traci Des Jardins, Jardinière (San Francisco)

CHEESE: blue, goat, Gorgonzola, Gruyère, Parmesan, pecorino

chicken
chives
coriander
crab
cream
crème fraîche
cucumbers
eggplant
eggs
endive
fennel pollen
fennel seeds
FISH, esp. grilled and/or whole
salmon, sea bass, snapper
frisée
garlic
ginger, fresh

I like fennel shaved raw, with just some lemon juice, olive oil, and fennel seeds. Fennel goes well with dried meats like prosciutto. It also pairs nicely with shellfish like langoustines, lobster, or crab. Fennel can work with fish as well as with meat. It goes really well with cold poached salmon or white, light meats like chicken or veal.
— GABRIEL KREUTHER, THE MODERN (NEW YORK CITY)

Fennel is a flavor I like so much that I have to show restraint with it. You can add anything to it because other flavors really adhere to it. You can braise it in olive oil and veal stock to get one flavor. Or you can braise it in olive oil, white wine, and water and get a whole other flavor. Or you can quarter it, caramelize it, and roast it in the oven — now you have a sugar flavor and it can become a dessert. I love fennel every way including braised, caramelized, dried, candied, and pureed. In the fall, I served raw shaved fennel with arugula, and shaved Honeycrisp apple with a dressing made of apple cider, honey, and mustard. Fennel puts the salad over the top with its crunch. In summer, we serve a fennel and fig tarte tatin with duck. You get a Fig Newton flavor from the fig and Pernod flavor from the fennel; they match really well.
— CARRIE NAHABEDIAN, NAHA (CHICAGO)
FENNEL POLLEN
Taste: sweet
Weight: light
Volume: quiet
Tips: Use to finish a dish.

- apricots
- beef
- boar
- chicken
- cream
- fennel seeds
- fish, esp. flakier white, poached or steamed
- garlic
- lamb
- lemon
- nuts, esp. almonds, pistachios

Flavor Affinities
- fennel pollen + lemon + yogurt
- pasta
- pork
- potatoes
- poultry
- rabbit
- rice or risotto
- salads
- salmon
- sea trout
- shellfish
- vegetables
- yogurt

Fennel pollen has a light, fennel-anise flavor with a floral component. It is delicate, so you don’t cook with it — you just finish a dish with it. It is great on lighter things like salads, poached or steamed flaky white fish, poultry, or pork. When a dish has fennel pollen, even before the food hits your mouth you will notice a floral smell that gets you thinking of summer, lighter foods, and freshness. I use it with my sea trout dish, which is served with a simple salad of green apple, fennel, jicama, pistachios, and dried gooseberries. The dish is topped with the pollen blended with some yogurt, lemon juice, and preserved lemon, which we drape over the fish. This dish just screams “summer.” With a glass of Sauvignon Blanc on the terrace in the early evening, you’re set!

— BRAD FARMERIE, PUBLIC (NEW YORK CITY)

I really like fennel pollen. The majority of the time, we use it in a marinade for meats like pork, boar, chicken, and lamb. It adds an interesting herbaceous, aromatic note and a mysterious flavor.

— SHARON HAGE, YORK STREET (DALLAS)
sauerkraut

*SAUSAGES, esp. Italian

Scandinavian cuisine

shellfish

soups, esp. fish

star anise

stews, esp. fish

stocks and broths

tarragon

tomatoes and tomato sauces

vegetables, esp. green

**Flavor Affinities**

fennel seeds + cinnamon + cloves

+ peppercorns + star anise

(five-spice powder)

---

**FENUGREEK**

**Season:** autumn

**Taste:** bitter, sweet

**Function:** heating

**Weight:** light-medium

**Volume:** quiet–moderate

---

cardamom

cauliflower

cheeses, esp. creamy

chicken

cinnamon

cloves

coriander

cream, esp. sour

cumin

**CURRIES AND CURRY POWDERS**

Ethiopian cuisine

fennel seeds

fish

garlic

Indian cuisine

lamb

---

I love fenugreek, and its incredible aromatics. It goes well with everything from lamb to chicken to vegetables.

— VIKRAM VIJ, VIJ'S (VANCOUVER)

---

**Dishes**

Bresaola with Fiddleheads and Pecorino

— Mario Batali, Babbo (New York City)

cheese: Comté, goat, Parmesan

cucumber

fish (e.g., halibut, salmon)

garlic

hollandaise sauce

horseradish

lamb

lemon, juice

MUSHROOMS, WILD, e.g.,

chanterelles, morels

mustard

oil: sesame, walnut

olive oil

onions, esp. cipollini, red, spring parsley, flat-leaf

pasta, esp. gnocchi

pepper

polenta

potatoes, esp. Yukon gold

poultry

prosciutto

ramps

salads

salt

sesame seeds

shallots

shallots

soy sauce

spinach

tarragon

thyme

veal

vinaigrettes

vinegar: balsamic, sherry

walnuts

yogurt

---

**FIDDLHEAD FERNS**

**Season:** spring

**Taste:** bitter

**Weight:** medium

**Volume:** moderate–loud

**Techniques/Tips:** Always serve cooked: blanch, boil, sauté, steam.

American cuisine, esp. New England

asparagus

bacon

basil

beans, fava

beef

brown butter

butter, sweet

cayenne

---

**Flavor Affinities**

fiddlehead ferns + butter + herbs + morel mushrooms + ramps

fiddlehead ferns + garlic + morel mushrooms + salmon

fiddlehead ferns + sesame oil and/or seeds + soy sauce
**FIGS, DRIED**

*Taste:* sweet  
*Weight:* medium  
*Volume:* moderate  
*Techniques:* stew

- almonds  
- anise seeds  
- apples  
- apricots, dried  
- bananas  
- bay leaf  
- brandy  
- caramel  
- cheese: goat, manchego, Parmesan, ricotta  
- cherries, dried  
- chestnuts  
- chocolate, esp. dark, white  
- cinnamon  
- cloves  
- coconut  
- coffee  
- cognac  
- cream  
- dates  
- game  
- ginger  
- HONEY  
- lemon: juice, zest  
- macadamia nuts  
- maple syrup  
- mascarpone  
- nutmeg  
- oats  
- ORANGE: fruit, juice  
- pastries  
- pears  
- pecans  
- pineapple  
- pistachios  
- prunes  
- quince  
- raisins, yellow  
- sugar, brown  
- sweet potatoes  
- vanilla  
- WALNUTS  
- WINE, RED, sweet

**Flavor Affinities**

dried figs + anise + oranges + walnuts

**FIGS, FRESH**

*Season:* summer–autumn  
*Taste:* sweet, astringent  
*Function:* cooling  
*Weight:* medium  
*Volume:* quiet–moderate  
*Techniques:* bake, broil, caramelize, deep-fry, grill, raw, roast

- ALMONDS  
- anchovies  
- anise, esp. green  
- apples  
- arugula

*Flavor Matchmaking: The Charts*
**Dishes**

**Fresh Fig Tart with a Dollop of Mascarpone**  
— Gina DePalma, pastry chef, Babbo (New York City)

**Fig and Ricotta Gelato**  
— Gina DePalma, pastry chef, Babbo (New York City)

**Honey-Baked Figs Stuffed with Walnuts**  
— Gina DePalma, pastry chef, Babbo (New York City)

**Black Mission Figs with Goat Cheese Mousse, Honey Ice Cream, and Port Sabayon**  
— Gary Danko, Gary Danko (San Francisco)

**Rogue River Oregonzola, Black Mission Figs, Lavender Honey, Toasted Hazelnuts**  
— Monica Pope, T’afia (Houston)

bacon  
butter, unsalted  
caramel  
**CHEESE:** blue, fromage blanc,  
goat, Gorgonzola, dry Jack,  
manchego, provolone, ricotta,  
Roquefort  
cherries  
chicken  
chocolate: dark, white  
cilantro  
cinnamon  
clove  
coffee / espresso  
cognac  
**CREAM AND ICE CREAM**  
cream cheese  
crème anglaise  
crème fraîche  
duck  
fish (e.g., bass)  
five-spice powder  
French cuisine, esp. southern  
game birds  
garlic  
ginger  
grapes  
ham, esp. Serrano  
hazelnuts  
**HONEY**  
Italian cuisine, esp. southern  
Kirsch  
lamb  
lavender  
lemon: juice, zest  
lime, juice  
liqueurs, esp. raspberry  
mango  
mascarpone  
meats, cured and smoked  
Mediterranean cuisine  
Middle Eastern cuisine  
mint  
Moroccan cuisine  
oil, grapeseed  
olive oil  
onions  
**ORANGE:** juice, zest  
pancetta  
pears  
pecans  
pepper, black  
pine nuts  
pistachios  
pork  
port  
prosciutto  
quail  
radicchio  
**RASPBERRIES**  
rice  
rosemary  
rum, esp. dark  
sorbets  
star anise  
**SUGAR:** brown, white  
thyme  
VANILLA  
Vin Santo  
**VINEGAR:** BALSAMIC, red wine, sherry  
WALNUTS  
wine: dry red, Marsala, port  

**Flavor Affinities**

figs + almonds + green anise  
figs + black pepper + ricotta cheese  
figs + caramel + vanilla + balsamic vinegar  
figs + cilantro + lime  
figs + cinnamon + honey + orange  
figs + cream + goat cheese + honey  
figs + cream + honey + raspberries  
figs + goat cheese + pine nuts  
figs + honey + mascarpone  
figs + lemon + rosemary  
figs + olive oil + rosemary  
figs + Pernod + walnuts  

**FILET MIGNON** (See Beef — Steak: Filet Mignon)

**FINES HERBES**

**Tips:** Use late in the cooking process.

French cuisine

**Flavor Affinities**

chervil + chives + parsley + tarragon
FISH — IN GENERAL
(See individual fish; Seafood)
Taste: sweet
Function: heating
Weight: light—medium
Volume: quiet—moderate

anise
basil
broths
butter
cream
dill
fennel
fines herbes (i.e., chervil, chives, parsley, tarragon)
garlic
ginger
grapefruit
leeks
lemon: juice, zest
lemongrass

Think of white fish — dorade, Dover sole, pompano, skate, snapper — as white meat, and red fish — salmon, tuna — as red meat. Salmon is like pork, and tuna like beef, and both combine better with stronger flavors. Tuna even pairs with some of the same flavors as beef, including black pepper, red wine, and wasabi.
— MICHEL RICHARD, CITRONELLE (WASHINGTON, DC)

I like my fish simply grilled or steamed. I choose fish that have a lot of flavor so very little has to be done to them. I don’t believe you need 10,000 things for a great piece of fish. Dover sole doesn’t need anything. Turbot has a wonderful flavor with no help. We get our baby octopus from Sicily and they have plenty of flavor.
— ODETTE FADA, SAN DOMENICO (NEW YORK CITY)
Dishes
Onion-Crusted White Fish with Tomato-Water Sauce
— Michel Richard, Citronelle (Washington, DC)

peppercorns
rhubarb
salt
tomatoes
wine, esp. white

Flavor Affinities
fish + ginger + lemongrass
fish + herbs + white wine
fish + onions + tomatoes

FISH SAUCE
Taste: salty
Weight: light
Volume: loud

lime, juice
sauces, dipping
shrimp
Southeast Asian cuisines
spring rolls
sugar
Thai cuisine
Vietnamese cuisine
vegetables

FIVE-SPICE POWDER
Taste: sweet
Weight: light
Volume: quiet–moderate

beef
chicken
Chinese cuisine
duck
pork
stews
stir-fries

Flavor Affinities
cinnamon + cloves + fennel seeds
+ star anise + Szechuan peppercorns

FLounder
Season: summer
Weight: light
Volume: quiet
Techniques: bake, broil, deep-fry, fry, poach, sauté, steam, stir-fry

almonds
basil
bread crumbs or cracker crumbs
butter
capers
chili sauce
chives
coconut milk
corn
cornmeal (e.g., as a crust)
crab
curry, green
dill
lemon
lime
Mediterranean cuisine
miso
noodles
olive oil
onions, Vidalia
pasta
peas
pepper, black
ramps
salt
seaweed, esp. konbu

Flavor Affinities
flounder + capers + lemon
flounder + shiso + ume
flounder + konbu seaweed + shiso

FOIE GRAS
Season: autumn
Weight: heavy
Volume: moderate
Techniques: braise, sauté, terrine

allspice
APPLES
apricots
Armagnac
bacon
brandy
cabbage
cherries
chives
chocolate
cognac
endive
figs: dried, fresh
French cuisine
ginger
grapes
leeks
lemon
mangoes
miso

Dishes
Flounder Wrapped in Spring Roll Paper Served with House-Made Egg Noodles, Thai Green Curry–Coconut Milk Broth with Snow Peas, Yuzu Lime, and Honey Mushrooms
— Bob Kinkead, Colvin Run (Vienna, Virginia)

Sesame-Flavored Flounder and Wakame Seaweed Soup
— Kaz Okochi, Kaz Sushi Bistro (Washington, DC)
I found a recipe for olive oil cake at the same time that I was perfecting making a foie gras mousse that was pliable to the point that it could be made into an icing. So, I created a savory cake topped with the icing. Then one day while I was online I heard someone mention Twinkies, and the next thing I knew I was ordering real Twinkie pans online. Three days later, Twinkies stuffed with foie gras was born. I serve it with fresh strawberries and black pepper. It seems like everything has been done already, but I like to think I am the only person working with Twinkies.

— BOB IACOVONE, CUVEÉ (NEW ORLEANS)

**FRENCH CUISINE — IN GENERAL**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dishes</th>
<th>Roasted Meals</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Beef</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cheese</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cream</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eggs</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Herbs</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mustards</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Onions</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parsley</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pastry</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pork</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Potatoes</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poultry</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Tarte flambée** is a dish that is 200 years old and was originally made by farmers in Alsace in the village’s wood-burning oven used for baking bread. The tarte flambée developed from what was on hand on the farm: cheese and cream from the cow, pork from the pig, and onions from the field, which they added to some dough. Since we don’t have a wood-burning oven [in the middle of Manhattan], we have to tweak the recipe from the classic. We have to tweak the cream because if we don’t, it breaks and just becomes grease. Instead, I use a mix of fromage blanc, cream, and sour cream so I can get the same result as cream in the original. And to compensate for not having a fire, I use an applewood-smoked bacon.

— GABRIEL KREUTHER, THE MODERN (NEW YORK CITY)
FRENCH CUISINE, NORTHERN (CONT.)

fish, freshwater
game
lobster
oysters
pork: bacon, ham
sausages
shellfish
veal

Flavor Affinities
bacon + cheese + cream

FRENCH CUISINE, SOUTHERN (aka Provençal Cuisine)
anchovies
anise
basil
beef, esp. stewed
bell peppers
chicken, esp. grilled
fish, esp. grilled
garlic
grilled dishes
herbes de Provence
lamb, esp. roasted
lavender
marjoram
meats
mustard
OLIVE OIL
olives
pâtes
pork
rosemary
sage
shellfish
soups
tomatoes
vegetables
wine

Flavor Affinities
basil + garlic + olive oil + Parmesan cheese
basil + olive oil + tomatoes
bell peppers + eggplant + garlic + onions + tomatoes + zucchini
chicken + garlic + olives + onions + tomatoes
garlic + egg yolk + lemon + olive oil + saffron
marjoram + rosemary + sage + thyme (aka herbes de Provence)
olives + basil + capers + garlic + olive oil (aka tapenade)
pork + anise + marjoram + thyme
seafood + garlic + olive oil + tomatoes

FRESHNESS
Season: spring–summer
Tips: Listed herbs are always used fresh (with little or no cooking), and add a note of freshness to a dish. Other listed flavors add a bright note to a dish. For the opposite, see listing for Slow-Cooked.

basil
chives
cilantro
citrus
dill
fennel pollen
mint	tarragon

FRISÉE (a fine-leaved variety of curly endive)
Season: year-round
Taste: sweet, bitter
Weight: light
Volume: quiet
Techniques: raw, wilt

almonds
anchovies
avocado
bacon / lardons
basil
bell peppers: red, yellow
beets

CHEESE: BLUE, GOAT, PARMESAN, ROQUEFORT

cherries, dried
chervil
chives
cilantro
croutons (accent)
cucumbers
eggs, esp. poached
endive
fat: bacon, duck
garlic
ginger
grapefruit
lemon, juice
lettuces: red oak leaf, red leaf
lime, juice
maple syrup
mushrooms, white
mustard, Dijon
oil: canola, grapeseed, hazelnut, walnut
olive oil
olives
onions, red
orange, juice
parsley, flat-leaf
pepper: black, white
salads, esp. warm
salt: kosher, sea
scallops
seafood
shallots
tangerines and tangerine juice
tarragon
tomatoes
vinaigrette
vinegar: sherry, white wine
Dishes
Salad "Lyonnaise": Italian Frisée, Applewood Slab Bacon, and Warm Poached Egg, Sherry Wine–Dijon Mustard Vinaigrette
— Carrie Nahabedian, Naha (Chicago)

Warm Frisée and Bacon Salad with Beet Carpaccio and Toasted Walnuts
— Lydia Shire, Locke-Ober Café (Boston)

Frisée and Spinach Salad with Dried Cherries, Blue Cheese, Walnuts, and Maple-Sherry Vinaigrette
— Charlie Trotter, Trotter’s to Go (Chicago)

walnuts (accent)
watercress

Flavor Affinities
frisée + anchovies + garlic + Parmesan cheese
frisée + bacon + poached egg
frisée + bacon + Roquefort cheese + garlic + shallots + sherry vinegar

FRUIT, DRIED (See also Dates, Figs, Raisins, etc.)
Taste: sweet
Tips: If the fruit is hard, steam before using.

apple juice
chocolate
cinnamon
ginger
lemon
nuts
pistachios
vanilla
walnuts

FRUIT, FRESH
(See also specific fruits)
Taste: sweet
Tips: Sugar enhances the natural flavor of fruit.

almonds
ginger, fresh
lemon: juice, zest
sabayon sauce

SUGAR
vanilla

FRUIT, TROPICAL (See also specific fruits, e.g., Mangos, Papayas, Pineapples, etc.)
Taste: sweet, sour

bananas
bourbon
caramel
chile peppers
chocolate
chocolate, white
cloves
coconut

coriander
cream and ice cream
five-spice powder
ginger
guava
honey
lemon: juice, zest
lemongrass
LIME: JUICE, ZEST
mangoes
melon, honeydew
mint
orange: juice, zest
pineapple
pomegranates
RUM
spirits, white: gin, vodka
strawberries
sugar: brown, white
vanilla
yogurt

Flavor Affinities
tropical fruit + coconut + honey + lime
tropical fruit + ginger + mint + orange + sugar

Tropical fruits are strong flavored, and stand up to chocolate better. At the same time, tropical fruits like bananas or mangoes are not overly sweet fruits, so caramel can stand up to them. With tropical fruits, I will use a little lime juice and often rum as well to help give them a little kick. With mangoes, I use a little light brown sugar — or I’ll even blend light brown and white sugar together because I’ll want the flavor but not want it to be too harsh.

— EMILY LUCHETTI, FARALLON (SAN FRANCISCO)

Dishes
Exotic Fruit Salad with Guava Sauce and Phyllo Galettes
— Dominique and Cindy Duby, Wild Sweets (Vancouver)

Chocolate Custard Cake with Exotic Fruit Gelée and Caramelized Bananas
— Dominique and Cindy Duby, Wild Sweets (Vancouver)

Tropical Fruit Salad with Rosewater and Sweet Tahini Yogurt
— Brad Farmerie, Public (New York City)
### GAME — IN GENERAL

*(See also Rabbit, Venison)*

**Season:** autumn  
**Weight:** heavy  
**Volume:** moderate–loud  
**Techniques:** braise, roast  
**Tips:** The flavor of cloves adds richness to game.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ingredient</th>
<th>Details</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>allspice</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cabbage, red</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cayenne</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cherries</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>chestnuts</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cloves</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cranberries, dried</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>garlic</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>gin</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>greens</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Italian cuisine</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>juniper berries</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>lentils</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Madeira</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>maple syrup</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mushrooms, wild</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mustard, Dijon</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>onions</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>parsley, flat-leaf</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>pepper, black</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>salt, sea</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>stock, beef</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sugar, brown</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>vinegar</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>wine, red</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### GARLIC

**Season:** year-round  
**Botanical relatives:** chives, leeks, onions, shallots  
**Function:** heating  
**Weight:** light–medium  
**Volume:** moderate (esp. cooked)–loud (esp. raw)  
**Techniques:** grill, raw, roast, sauté

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ingredient</th>
<th>Details</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>almonds</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>anchovies</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bacon</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>barbecue</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>basil</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bay leaf</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>beans</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>beef</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>beets</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bread</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>broccoli</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cabbage</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cajun cuisine</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>caraway seeds</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cayenne</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cheese, Parmesan</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>chicken</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>chile peppers</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### GARAM MASALA

**Function:** warming  
**Tips:** Add near the end of the cooking process or before serving.

**Indian cuisine**

**Flavor Affinities**

- cardamom + black pepper + cinnamon + cloves + coriander + cumin + dried chiles + fennel + mace + nutmeg
When **garlic** needs to be there, it needs to be there. That includes a lot of dishes, such as lamb. Garlic is also called for with all kinds of vegetables, sauces, pastas, and salads.

— **DAVID WALTUCK**, CHAFTERELLE (NEW YORK CITY)

I use **garlic** primarily in two ways: infused into olive oil, or served crispy as a garnish. I’ll use the garlic oil for cooking — and even if a dish will have garlic added later, I will start with this oil. For crispy brown garlic, you start by slicing it thinly like a chip. The garlic is then put into cold olive oil and cooked until it is just brown. Then, you add parsley, red pepper flakes, and an acid like lemon juice or vinegar to make a vinaigrette. You can even add some stock like a fumet, which is wonderful, too — served hot, it is great with almost any kind of fish, from something light all the way to oily blue fish.

— **ALEXANDRA RAIJ**, TIA POL (NEW YORK CITY)

---

**Moroccan cuisine**
- mushrooms
- mustard
- oil: canola, peanut
- OLIVE OIL
- onions
- oregano
- paprika, esp. sweet
- parsley, flat-leaf
- pasta and pasta sauces
- pepper, black, white
- pesto (key ingredient)
- pork
- potatoes
- rice
- rosemary
- saffron
- sage
- salads (e.g., Caesar)
- salt
- sauces
- shallots
- shellfish
- shrimp
- soups
- soy sauce
- spinach
- steak
- stocks: chicken, vegetable
- sugar
- tarragon
- Thai cuisine

**thyme**

**TOMATOES AND TOMATO SAUCE**
- vegetables
- Vietnamese cuisine
- VINEGAR, esp. balsamic, red
  - wine
- wine, white
- zucchini

**GEORGIAN CUISINE (RUSSIAN)**
- fish
- garlic
- meats
- pepper, red ground
- pickles
- pomegranates
- vinegar
- walnuts

**Flavor Affinities**
- coriander + dill + fenugreek
  - (blue) + garlic + red peppers
- garlic + walnuts

**GERMAN CUISINE**
- allspice
- anise
- bay leaf
- beer
- bread, rye

---

**caraway seeds**
- chives
- cinnamon
- dill: seeds, weed
- fish
- ginger
- horseradish
- juniper berries
- mace
- meats, esp. with fruits
- nutmeg
- paprika, sweet
- parsley
- pepper, white
- poppy seeds
- pork
- potatoes
- sauerbraten
- sauerkraut
- sausages
- sour cream
- sugar
- veal
- vinegar

**Flavor Affinities**
- caraway + paprika + sour cream
- caraway + sauerkraut
- cream + horseradish + fish or meat
- cream + paprika + poppy seeds
- dill + cucumbers
- ginger + sauerbraten
- juniper berries + game
- mace + chicken
- nutmeg + potatoes
- sugar + vinegar

**GIN**
- **Weight**: light–medium
- **Volume**: quiet–loud
  - apple brandy
  - apricot brandy
  - basil
  - blackberries
  - celery
  - Champagne

---

*Flavor Matchmaking: The Charts* 169
Cucumber and mint is a fashionable combination in cocktails, especially those with Hendrick's gin, which has a cucumber flavor. Cucumber is a flavor that's distinct yet delicate, and very refreshing. It goes beautifully with a range of foods, from Asian cuisine to smoked salmon.

— JERRI BANKS, COCKTAIL CONSULTANT (NEW YORK CITY)

With gin, or even Martini & Rossi Bianco, I love the combination of blackberries and sage. Blackberries have an indescribable flavor to begin with, and the sage gives them a brooding quality.

— JERRI BANKS, COCKTAIL CONSULTANT (NEW YORK CITY)

cilantro
Cointreau
cola
cranberry juice
cucumber
Curacao
Earl Grey tea
ginger
HERBS
honey
lemon juice
lime juice
mint
orange juice
oysters
pomegranate
pomegranate molasses
rose geranium
rosemary
sage
sugar
TONIC

Gin Flavors
Beefeater: pear
Hendrick's: cucumber, rose petals
Old Raj: saffron
Zuidam Dry: orange peel

GINGER
Season: year-round
Taste: sour, hot
Weight: light-medium
Volume: loud
Techniques: bake, stir-fry

allspice
almonds
anise
apples
apricots
Arabic cuisine
ASIAN CUISINES
bananas
basil

Flavor Affinities
gin + apple brandy + lemon juice + orange juice
gin + basil + lemon
gin + blackberries + sage
gin + cilantro + lime
gin + Cointreau + lime + rosemary
gin + cucumber + mint
gin + Earl Grey tea + lemon + sugar
gin + lime + mint
gin + lime + mint + pomegranate
gin + lime + orange

Dishes
Ginger-Honey Gelato
— Gina DePalma, pastry chef, Babbo (New York City)

Ginger-Lemon Drink: Ginger, Lemon, Sugar, Salt, and Pepper
— Vikram Vij and Meeru Dhalwala, Vij's (Vancouver)
HONEY
Indian cuisine, esp. curries
Indonesian cuisine
JAPANESE CUISINE
kaffir lime leaves
Korean cuisine
kumquats
lamb
lavender
leeks
lemon
lemongrass
lemon herbs (e.g., balm, thyme, verbena)
LIME, JUICE
lobster
lychees
mangoes
maple syrup
marinades
mascarpone
meats
melon
Middle Eastern cuisine
mint
molasses
Moroccan cuisine
mushrooms
mussels
noodles and noodle dishes
North African cuisine
nutmeg
oats
oil: canola, grapeseed
olive oil
onions, esp. red
orange
papaya
passion fruit
peaches
peanuts
pears
pepper, white
persimmons
pineapple
plums
pork
prunes
pumpkin
quince
raisins
raspberries
rhubarb
rice
rum, esp. dark
saffron
salad dressings
salads, esp. Asian
salt, kosher
sauces
SCALLIONS
scallops
sesame oil
shallots
shellfish
shrimp
soups
SOY SAUCE
star anise
steak
stews
stocks: beef, chicken
strawberries
SUGAR: white, brown
sushi and sashimi
sweet potatoes
Tabasco sauce
tamarind
tarragon
tea
Thai cuisine
tomatoes
turmeric
vanilla
vegetables
verbena
Vietnamese cuisine
VINEGAR: champagne, cider,
rice wine
walnuts
wasabi (e.g., with seafood)
wine, sweet
yogurt
yuzu
Flavor Affinities
ginger + carrot + celery + garlic
ginger + chile peppers + garlic
ginger + chocolate + cream + rum
ginger + cider vinegar + sugar
ginger + cilantro + garlic + scallions
ginger + cream + honey
ginger + lemon + mint
ginger + lemon + pepper + salt + sugar
GINGER, GROUND
Taste: pungent
Function: heating
Weight: light–medium
Volume: moderate–loud
Asian cuisine
baked goods (e.g., breads, cakes, cookies)
bananas
beverages
cardamom
carrots
chicken
chocolate
chutneys
cinnamon
cloves
couscous
cream and ice cream
desserts

Ginger and honey is one of my favorite flavor combinations.
— GINA DEPALMA, BABBO (NEW YORK CITY)

I’ll use ginger more for its heat than its sweetness. For example, I’ll juice it to add to a carrot or squash puree, which gives it heat and backbone.
— BRADFORD THOMPSON, MARY ELAINE’S AT THE PHOENICIAN
(SCOTTSDALE, ARIZONA)
Ginger is great on its own, but also works great with other flavors. It’s one of those “wake up” flavors that you can hide beneath all sorts of other flavors. I think it works especially well with citrus. It works with yuzu, passion fruit, coconut, banana, and other tropical flavors.

— MICHAEL LAISKONIS, LE BERNARDIN (NEW YORK CITY)

My mom always had candied ginger in the spice cupboard when I was growing up. Today at the restaurant, we take candied ginger and combine it with whatever fruit is in season — from nectarines, to cherries, to quince — and then add Vin Santo to make a sauce for our foie gras. Vin Santo brings nuttiness and candied ginger brings spice that both cut through the fat of the foie gras. I think nectarines and candied ginger are a perfect flavor combination.

— HOLLY SMITH, CAFÉ JUANITA (SEATTLE)

**GOAT CHEESE**
*(See Cheese, Goat)*

**GRAPEFRUIT**

*Season:* year-round  
*Taste:* sour  
*Weight:* light  
*Volume:* loud  
*Techniques:* bake, broil, raw

arugula  
asparagus  
avocado  
bananas  
butter, unsalted  
Campari  
caramel  
cashews  
cheviche  
Champagne  
chicken  
coconut  
crab  
creme fraiche  
fish, esp. grilled  
fromage blanc  
gin  
ginger, fresh  
Grand Marnier  
grenadine syrup  
hazelnuts  
honey  
lemon  
lime  
macadamia nuts  
melons  
meringue  
mint, fresh  
miso  
olive oil  
onions, esp. spring  
orange  
papaya  
pecans  
pineapple  
pomegranate  
poppy seeds  
port  
raspberries  
rum  
_salads, esp. fruit  
salmon  
seafood  
seaweed  
shrimp  
sorbet  
star anise  
strawberries  
SUGAR: brown, white  
tarragon  
tequila  
tomatoes  
vanilla  
vinaigrette  
vinegar, champagne  
vodka  
walnuts  
watercress  
wine, sparkling, white  
yogurt
Dishes
Yuzu Cream, Caramelized Rice, Grapefruit, Green Tea Ice Cream, Crisp Meringue,
Malted Rum Milk Chocolate Ice Cream
— Michael Laiskonis, pastry chef, Le Bernardin (New York City)

We serve a dish of grapefruit, crab salad, and mint. Grapefruit is sweet and a little bitter, which makes it fun to play with. I like mint in the dish because it refreshes and wakes your palate up. When you get a little taste of mint it brings up the other flavors of the dish.
— Gabriel Kreuther, The Modern (New York City)

I love tarragon with grapefruit. It is a classic.
— Michael Laiskonis, Le Bernardin (New York City)

I have served a grapefruit and seaweed crab salad with miso dressing. I also like grapefruit with asparagus.
— Brad Farmerie, Public (New York City)

Flavor Affinities
grapefruit + avocado + crème fraîche
grapefruit + caramel + meringue
grapefruit + crab + miso + seaweed
grapefruit + fromage blanc + pomegranate
grapefruit + mint + sugar
grapefruit + star anise + yogurt

GRAPE
Season: summer–autumn
Taste: sweet
Weight: light–medium
Volume: quiet–moderate

almonds
apples
arugula
brandy
cayenne
CHEESE, esp. blue, cow’s milk,
goat’s milk
chicken
cheese, white
cognac
cream
cumin
curry
curry leaf
duck

endive
fennel seeds
fish
game, esp. roasted
garlic
hazelnuts
honey
lemon
mint
mustard seeds
olive oil
paprika
pears
pecans

pistachios
pork, esp. roasted
poultry, esp. roasted
raspberries
rice
rosemary
rum
salads, esp. chicken, fruit, tuna,
Waldorf
salt
sour cream
strawberries
sugar
vinew, sherry
walnuts
wine: red, white
yogurt

GREEK CUISINE (See also Mediterranean Cuisines)
allspice
anise
basil
bay leaf
beef
bell peppers
CHEESE: FETA, goat, sheep
chicken
cinnamon
cloves
custard
dill
eggplant
eggs
fennel
figs
fish, esp. grilled
GARLIC
grape leaves
honey
kebabs

I never mess with the flavor of Concord grapes; I always just make them into a sorbet. I was upstate in my cabin when the first Concord grapes came into season. I wanted sorbet so badly that I cut one of my T-shirts in half to use as a strainer, and then used my broom handle with the shirt to squeeze every last bit of juice from the grapes. The sorbet was awesome!
— Johnny Iuzzini, Jean Georges (New York City)
**Dishes**

Mediterranean “Greek Salad” of Mt. Vikos Feta, Kalamata Olives, Plum Tomatoes, Cucumbers, Torn Mint, and Oregano with Warm Feta Cheese “Turnover”

— Carrie Nahabedian, Naha (Chicago)

LAMB
LEMON
meats, esp. grilled, roasted
mint
nutmeg
nuts
octopus
OLIVE OIL
olives
onions
oregano
parsley
phyllo dough
pine nuts
pita bread
pork
raisins
rice
salads, esp. with mint
shellfish
spinach
thyme
tomatoes
yogurt
zucchini
tomatoes + cinnamon
yogurt + cinnamon

**GREEN BEANS**
(See Beans, Green)

**GREENS — IN GENERAL**
(See also specific greens)
Season: year-round
Taste: bitter
Weight: medium-heavy
Volume: moderate-loud
Techniques: blanch, raw, sauté, steam

allspice
arugula
bacon
basil
butter
caraway seeds
celery or celery seeds
CHEESE, esp. grated (e.g., Asiago, Jack, Parmesan)
chicory
chili sauce
coriander
corn
curry
dill
eggs, esp. hard-boiled
fennel
GARLIC
ginger
ham
horseradish
leeks
legumes
lemon, juice
mushrooms
mustard, Dijon
nutmeg
nuts, toasted
oil: mustard, nut, peanut, sesame
OLIVE OIL
onions, green
oregano
paprika
parsley
pasta
peaches
pears
pomegranates
potatoes, esp. new and/or red
red pepper flakes
rice
sage
salads
salt, kosher
savory
sesame seeds
shellfish: oysters, esp. fried, shrimp
sweet potatoes
Tabasco sauce
tarragon
thyme
tomatoes
VINEGAR: balsamic, red wine

**GREENS, COLLARD**
Season: winter–spring
Taste: bitter
Botanical relatives: broccoli, Brussels sprouts, cabbage, cauliflower, kale, kohlrabi
Weight: medium-heavy
Volume: moderate-loud
Techniques: boil, braise, steam, stir-fry

Flavor Affinities
cucumber + dill + garlic + yogurt
dill + lemon
dill + lemon + olive oil
dill + yogurt
eggplant + custard + garlic + meat
eggplant + garlic + olive oil
eggs + lemon
lamb + garlic + lemon + oregano
lemon + olive oil
lemon + olive oil + oregano
lemon + oregano
phyllo dough + honey + nuts
rice + grape leaves
rice + nuts
spinach + feta cheese

Dishes

A Simple Salad of Beautiful Greens, Forelli Pears, Pomegranate, and Saba Balsamic

— Carrie Nahabedian, Naha (Chicago)
It's hard to even think about \textit{bitter greens} without thinking about toasted nuts. You can get the flavor from the nuts themselves, or from toasted nut oils, which are balanced by the bright fruitiness of cider vinegar.

— \textsc{Michael Anthony}, \textit{Gramercy Tavern (New York City)}

\textbf{GREENS, TURNIP}

\textit{Season}: fall–winter

\textbf{Techniques}: boil, braise

- \textit{bacon}
- \textit{black-eyed peas}
- \textit{eggs}
- \textit{ham hocks}
- \textit{onions}
- \textit{sesame oil}
- \textit{soy sauce}

\textbf{GRILLED DISHES}

\textit{artichokes,} \textit{asparagus,} \textit{bell peppers,} \textit{chicken,} \textit{corn,} \textit{esp. on the cob,} \textit{eggplant,} \textit{endive,} \textit{fennel,} \textit{fish,} \textit{whole,} \textit{garlic,} \textit{hamburgers,} \textit{hot dogs,} \textit{lamb: butterfried, chops,} \textit{lobster,} \textit{mushrooms}

A salad is a tricky thing to season. If you put the salt on too early, it will wilt the \textit{greens}. You have to be careful not to leach it of its life!

— \textsc{Traci Des Jardins}, \textit{Jardinière (San Francisco)}

\textbf{Dishes}

\textit{Wild Dandelion Greens with Anchovy Vinaigrette}

— \textsc{David Pasternak}, \textit{Esca (New York City)}
GRILLED DISHES (CONT.)

onions
pineapple
pork: chops, loin
salmon
sausages
shrimp, esp. skewered
squash, summer
steaks
swordfish
tomatoes
tuna
turkey: breasts
veal: chops, steaks
zucchini

GRITS
Techniques: simmer

cheese: cheddar, Parmesan
corn
cream
garlic
mascarpone
nutmeg
pepper, black
salt
sausage, andouille
shrimp (to accompany)
Southern cuisine (American)

GROUPER
Season: spring
Weight: medium
Volume: quiet
Techniques: bake, braise, broil,
deep-fry, grill, poach, roast, sauté,
steam, stir-fry

almonds
anchovies
artichokes

bacon
bay leaf
bell peppers, red
bok choy
butter
capers
carrots
cayenne
celery
cheese, Asiago
chervil
chile peppers, Anaheim
chili sauce
cucumber
derby
endive
garlic
ginger
lemon, juice
lime, juice
Mediterranean cuisine
mushrooms, porcini
oil: corn, sesame, vegetable
olive oil
olives, picholine
onions, white
oyster sauce
parsley, flat-leaf
pepper: black, white
port
rosemary
sage
salt, sea
sesame, seeds
shallots
soy sauce
stocks: chicken, fish, pork
tarragon
thyme
tomatoes
vermouth, dry
vinegar: balsamic, sherry
wine: red, white
zucchini

GUAVAS
Season: summer–autumn
Taste: sweet
Weight: medium
Volume: moderate
Techniques: bake, juice, poach

BANANAS
cashews
cheese
chocolate, white
coconut
cream
cream cheese
curry powder
ginger
ham
honey
lemon
lime, juice
macadamia nuts
mascarpone
oil, vegetable
onions, yellow
orange
passion fruit
pineapple
pork
poultry
raisins
rum
salads, fruit
sauces
strawberries
sugar: brown, white
vanilla
vinegar, white

Dishes
Grilled American Red Grouper on Crab Hash, Pancetta–Red Onion Vinaigrette
— Sanford D’Amato, Sanford (Milwaukee)
Halibut from the East Coast is the most delicate and silky fish. It is different than Alaskan halibut, which is drier, meatier, and more robust. East Coast halibut is so delicate that anything can kill it. That is why we steam and poach so much here: Even searing it too strongly in the pan will hurt a piece of halibut.

We'll poach halibut, then serve it with a blood orange vinaigrette made with extra-virgin olive oil, which gives it a round and full flavor. The fish is then served atop a carpaccio of golden beets that have been cooked in sherry vinegar. The beets have a sweet-and-sour flavor to them. They are also very crunchy, which I like with the creamy texture of the halibut. The vinaigrette brings the right degree of acidity to the dish to make it exciting.

— ERIC RIPERT, LE BERNARDIN (NEW YORK CITY)

Halibut is a gentle-tasting fish, which leads to gentle herbs like cilantro, chives, or chervil.

— JERRY TRAUNFELD, THE HERBFARM (WOODINVILLE, WASHINGTON)
Dishes
Wellfleet Line-Caught Halibut, Sweet Corn, Shiitake Mushrooms, and Lemon Thyme Sauce
— David Bouley, Upstairs (New York City)
Almond-Crusted Halibut with Parsnip Puree, Fava Beans, Haricots Verts, and Wild Mushrooms
— David Bouley, Danube (New York City)
Halibut Braised Tomato, Olives, Escarole, and Spring Salad
— Daniel Boulud/Bertrand Chemel, Café Boulud (New York City)
Olive Oil-Poached Halibut with Star Route Farm’s Fava Beans, Fennel Salad, and Niçoise Olives
— Traci Des Jardins, Jardinière (San Francisco)
Alaskan Halibut, Potato, and Black Pepper Crust
— Hubert Keller, Fleur de Lys (San Francisco)
Alaskan Halibut on a Bed of Creamy Leeks with Asparagus Puree, Fines Herbe, Spring Ramps, Favas, and English Peas
— Bob Kinkead, Kinkead’s (Washington, DC)
Chermoula Halibut with Red Quinoa, Edamame, and Shell Bean Salad with Preserved Lemon Vinaigrette
— Monica Pope, T’afia (Houston)
Halibut with Morel Mushrooms, English Peas, and Fingerling Potatoes
— Alfred Portale, Gotham Bar and Grill (New York City)
Halibut, Kohlrabi, Celery, Verbena-Lime Emulsion
— Michel Richard, Citronelle (Washington, DC)
Halibut Poached with Sweet-and-Sour Golden and Red Beets, Citrus and Extra-Virgin Olive Oil Emulsion
— Eric Ripert, Le Bernardin (New York City)
Alaskan Halibut Braised in the Brick Oven with Marble Potatoes, Baby Carrots, English Peas, Butter, and Cilantro
— Judy Rodgers, Zuni Café (San Francisco)
Line-Caught Seal Rock Halibut, Leek Emulsion, Reduced Chardonnay, Bacon Vinaigrette
— Rick Tramonto, Tru (Chicago)

Flavor Affinities
halibut + anchovies + black olives
halibut + anchovies + garlic + lemon + sorrel
halibut + apples + celery root + parsnips
halibut + beets + blood orange + celery root + parsnips
halibut + bok choy + sesame seeds
halibut + chicory + grapefruit
halibut + coriander + fennel + lemon
halibut + garlic + lemon + sorrel
halibut + scallions + white wine

HAM
Taste: salty
Weight: medium
Volume: moderate-loud (depending on smokiness)
Techniques: bake, sauté

allspice
apples and applesauce
arugula
bacon
bay leaf
breakfast / brunch
butter, unsalted
buttermilk
cayenne

CHEESE: cheddar, Emmental, Fontina, Gruyère, Jack, manchego, mozzarella, Parmesan, Swiss
chestnuts
cilantro
cinnamon
cloves
corn
cornmeal
French cuisine
eggs
garlic
greens
honey

Italian cuisine, esp. with prosciutto di Parma
macaroni
maple syrup
mushrooms
mustard, Dijon

nutmeg
olive oil
onions, red
orange, juice
parsley
pears
peas
pepper, black
pine nuts
potatoes
sage
Dishes

Ravolios of Virginia Country Ham and Fontina Cheese
— Patrick O’Connell, The Inn at Little Washington (Washington, Virginia)

Serrano Ham with Roasted Onions, Manchego Cheese, and Watercress
— Charlie Trotter, Trotter’s to Go (Chicago)

Virtually all vegetables — from asparagus to green beans — pair well with ham because of its natural saltiness.
— JOSÉ ANDRÉS, CAFÉ ATLÁNTICO (WASHINGTON, DC)

One of the happiest trios in the flavor world is Ibérico ham, manchego cheese, and manzanilla sherry.
— ADRIAN MURCIA, CHANTERELLE (NEW YORK CITY)

If you are a first timer, the only thing you should combine with Ibérico ham is the warmth of your tongue. Just let it rest on your tongue and let your 37 degrees Celsius do the rest! You can use just the fat of Ibérico ham melted in a pan and make scrambled eggs or a tortilla, and it will add amazing flavor and aroma.
— JOSÉ ANDRÉS, CAFÉ ATLÁNTICO (WASHINGTON, DC)

sauce, Mornay
scallions
Southern cuisine (American)
soy sauce
spinach
stock, chicken
sugar: brown, white
sweet potatoes
tarragon
thyme
vinegar, balsamic
wine: dry sherry, Madeira red, white

Flavor Affinities
ham + cheese + mustard
ham + honey + soy sauce
ham + Jack cheese + greens + mushrooms
ham + mozzarella cheese + red onion

HAM, IBÉRICO
cheese, pressed sheep’s milk (e.g., manchego)

HAM, SERRANO
asparagus
beans, green
cheese, manchego
olive oil
peppers, piquillo
Spanish cuisine
tomatoes

HAZELNUT OIL
(See Oil, Hazelnut)

HAZELNUTS
Taste: sweet, salty
Weight: medium
Volume: moderate—loud

almonds
apples
apricots

asparagus
bananas
beets
berries
butter, unsalted
buttermilk
caramel
carrots
cheese: feta, goat, Gruyère, ricotta, Taleggio
cherries
chestnuts
CHOCOLATE, esp. dark or white
cinnamon
cocoa powder
coffee / espresso
cognac
cranberries
cream and ice cream
cream cheese
custard
dates
figs
garlic
ginger
grapefruit
grapes
hazelnut oil
honey
Kirsch
kiwi
lemon
liqueur: almond (e.g., amaretto), hazelnut (e.g., Frangelico), orange
mango
maple syrup
mascarpone
mint
nectarines
nutmeg
oats
orange: juice, zest
pastry
peaches
pears
pecans
persimmons
plums
prunes
pumpkin
quail
raisins
raspberries
rum
sauces
soups
strawberries
sugar: brown, confectioner’s, granulated
sweet potatoes
tea
VANILLA
vegetables
walnuts
wine: red, sweet, white

HAZELNUTS (CONT.)

Hazelnuts have a complicated flavor, though not as complicated as walnuts.
— MARCEL DESAULNIERS, THE TRELLIS (WILLIAMSBURG, VIRGINIA)

Hazelnuts are from the north and are used in Piedmontese cooking. Hazelnuts are very rich and round and buttery, so I will use them to achieve a rich, fatty quality in my dessert. Hazelnuts with chocolate are a natural. Hazelnut with grapes are great; it’s like peanut butter and jelly!
— GINA DEPALMA, BABBO (NEW YORK CITY)

I am more of an herb guy than a spice guy. It comes back to a certain conservatism I have regarding food. The French are not big on spices; they use more herbs. I know the spices used in European cooking and use them in moderation. I am not going to serve a dish that is wildly nutmegged!
— DAVID WALTUCK, CHANTERELLE (NEW YORK CITY)

HERBES DE PROVENCE

French cuisine, southern
meats
stews, esp. vegetable
vegetables

Flavor Affinities
basil + fennel seeds + lavender + marjoram + rosemary + sage +
summer savory + thyme

Dishes
Chocolate-Hazelnut Cake with Orange Sauce and Hazelnut Gelato
— Gina DePalma, Babbo (New York City)

Hazelnut and Chocolate Soufflé
— Odette Fada, San Domenico (New York City)

Gianduia Napoleon with Chocolate-Hazelnut Ganache, Frozen Caramel Mousse, Crispy Hazelnut Nougatine
— Gale Gand, pastry chef, Tru (Chicago)
We grow forty different tomatoes and eight different basilis. Our farmer planted the tomatoes surrounded by the basil, and I thought he did it because they taste good together. It turns out that doing so attracts beneficial insects to each. Our farmer believes that tomato and basil work so well on the plate because they work so well in the field. He also explained that if you plant certain basils next to tomatoes, you can taste it in the tomato.

All our cooks take care of their own section of the herb garden. The garde-manger cooks [who prepare appetizers] look after the chives and chervil. The fish cooks care for the lemon herbs like lemon thyme and lemongrass, and the meat cooks for the rosemary, sage, and thyme. Our pastry cooks tend the edible flowers that can be candied, and mint and lemon verbena, which they use in sorbets.

— DAN BARBER, BLUE HILL AT STONE BARNES (POCANTICO HILLS, NEW YORK)

I am a big fan of roasting and resting meat on herbs. If you roast a rib eye, prime rib, or filet mignon, most people would put it on a sheet tray with a roasting rack. One day, I didn't have a roasting rack but I had a lot of thyme and savory and rosemary, so I threw the meat on top and roasted it. The technique did the trick by keeping the meat from the juices and it also enhanced the flavor that much more. Since then, we have stopped using roasting racks for our meats and switched to herbs. During the roasting process, I like to turn the meat so that the flavor of the herbs penetrates even more. Since you are roasting in a closed oven, the air circulates the herb flavor.

For a lamb shoulder, if you can't get hay, I would recommend using savory, thyme, sage, and rosemary. This technique is great for a whole chicken: slice some truffles to put under the chicken skin, brush it with butter, and put it on a bed of savory and thyme. It will be pretty incredible.

— VITALY PALEY, PALEY'S PLACE (PORTLAND, OREGON)
HONEY

Taste: sweet, astringent
Function: healing
Weight: medium-heavy
Volume: moderate–loud

almonds
apples
apricots
baked goods (e.g., biscuits, breads)
bananas
brandy
butter
buttermilk
carrots
cheese: goat, ricotta, soft
chestnuts
chicken
Chinese cuisine
chocolate: dark, white
cinnamon
coconut
coffee
cognac
CREAM AND ICE CREAM
currants, red
dates
desserts
duck
figs, esp. dried
fruit
ginger
grapefruit
grapes
Greek cuisine
guava
ham
hazelnuts
kiwi fruit
kumquats
lamb
lavender

I might grab honey when I am working with nutty flavors or to macerate some fruit. You can also scorch honey to create a whole new flavor; one of my favorite dishes is a burnt honey caramelized pistachio ice cream.

— MICHAEL LAISKONIS, LE BERNARDIN (NEW YORK CITY)

I use honey as a flavor, not as a sweetener like sugar. In my honey panna cotta, I add some sugar to make it sweet enough. If I used only honey as a sweetener, the flavor of honey would be too strong and the panna cotta would taste a little flat.

— EMILY LUCHETTI, FARALLON (SAN FRANCISCO)

I like the combination of fresh pineapple topped with warm honey. I will glaze my raspberry tart with flower honey, and my apple tart with chestnut honey. Chestnut honey gives a rustic flavor that goes well with the apple.

— MICHEL RICHARD, CITRONELLE (WASHINGTON, DC)

Dishes

Lavender Honey-Roasted Pig with Spiced Banana Puree
— Sandy D’Amato, Sanford (Milwaukee)

Honey Semifreddo with Tropical Consommé, Fresh Coconut, and Bloomed Basil Seeds
— Celina Tio, American Restaurant (Kansas City)
Flavor Affinities
honey + almonds + chicken + pomegranate
honey + bananas + lavender + pork
honey + cream + pistachios
honey + fruit + yogurt

HONEY, BLUEBERRY
cheese, esp. cheddar

HONEY, CHESTNUT
Taste: sweet-bitter
cheese, esp. goat, ricotta, triple crème

HONEY, RASPBERRY
cheese, esp. cheddar

HONEYDEW
Season: midsummer
Taste: sweet
Weight: light-medium
Volume: moderate
basil
blackberries
cardamom
Champagne
chiles
coconut milk
coriander
cream
cumin
cumin
flavor
fruit
ginger
grapefruit
honey
lemon, juice
lemon basil
lime
melon, cantaloupe
milk
mint
nectarines
peaches
red pepper flakes
pepper: black, white
prosciutto
ricotta cheese
salt (pinch)
scallions
strawberries
sugar
tarragon
wine, sweet
yogurt

Flavor Affinities
honeydew melon + figs + mint + prosciutto

HORSERADISH
Season: spring–autumn
Taste: pungent, hot
Weight: light–medium
Volume: very loud
Tips: Use horseradish raw or add at end of cooking process. Heat diminishes the pungency of horseradish.
apples, esp. Golden Delicious
apricots

Austrian cuisine
avocados
BEEF, ESP. CORNED OR ROAST
beets
celery
chicken
chives
cinnamon
cloves
corn
CREAM
cream cheese
crème fraîche
dill
Eastern European cuisine
eggs
fennel
fish, esp. oily, smoked
garlic
German cuisine
ham
ketchup
lemon, juice
lime, juice
lobster
mascarpone
mayonnaise
meats, esp. cold
mustard
olive oil
oxtails
oysters
parsley
pears
pepper, black
pork
potatoes
Russian cuisine
salads
salmon
salmon, smoked
salt: kosher, sea
sauces
sausage
shellfish
sour cream
steak

Dishes
Honeydew-Mint Sorbet with Fresh Blackberries
— Gina DePalma, pastry chef, Babbo (New York City)

Honeydew Melon Salad with Oven-Roasted Tomatoes, Goat Cheese, and Pistachios
— Gabriel Kreuther, The Modern (New York City)
Heating grated horseradish changes the horseradish completely. It makes it more mellow and takes away the bite while keeping its yummy flavor. Horseradish prepared this way works well with Nantucket Bay scallops that are naturally sweet and work with the sweetness of the horseradish. We will also use it in a lemony vinaigrette and dress a smoked trout with it.

First, grate horseradish on a microplane [a fine grater]. Coat a ten-inch skillet with some Ligurian olive oil, and heat the horseradish over medium heat. Watch it very closely, because the minute it starts to turn from its blond color, it is done. From there, transfer it into cold pans to cool it quickly. When it is totally cool and has its crunch, add some lemon zest and kosher salt.

— HOLLY SMITH, CAFÉ JUANITA (SEATTLE)

sugar
Tabasco sauce
tomatoes and tomato paste
tROUT
vinegar
walnuts
Worcestershire sauce
yogurt

Flavor Affinities
horseradish + apples + pork + sour cream
horseradish + beef + beets
horseradish + beets + cream cheese
horseradish + garlic + olive oil
horseradish + salt + vinegar
horseradish + seafood + tomatoes

HOTNESS (of indoor or outdoor temperature; see also Summer)
chilled dishes and beverages
fish
grilled dishes
herbs, esp. cooling
olive oil–based dishes
raw dishes
salads, esp. fruit, vegetable

If it is hot outside, I make sure there are lots of salads on the menu.

— ANDREW CARMELLINI, A VOCE
(NEW YORK CITY)

wheat
wine, esp. Tokaji Aszu

Flavor Affinities
onions + paprika
onions + paprika + pork fat
onions + paprika + sour cream

HYSSOP
Taste: bitter
Weight: medium
Volume: strong

beans, green
beef
beets
cabbage
carrots
chicken
cranberries
eggs
fruits
lamb
meats
parsley
pork
rice
rosemary
salads: fruit, green
soups, esp. chicken
stews
thyme
tomatoes
turkey, esp. stuffed and roasted vegetables
venison

In Eastern European or Hungarian cooking, you will see a stewed or braised dish flavored with paprika that is cut with sour cream either in it or served on top so that it mixes together as you eat it. I serve rare roasted venison in venison stock with hot and sweet paprika that is essentially a goulash. Alongside, I serve creamed sauerkraut that bleeds into the sauce and gives the same effect as a goulash. Even though the sauerkraut has an intense flavor, it is still mild because it has been cooked in cream. It is not a Hungarian dish but rather a play on a Hungarian dish, and it works in the context of the subtler intensity of flavors I like.

— DAVID WALTUCK, CHANTERELLE (NEW YORK CITY)
Tomatoes are as important to making **Indian cuisine** as they are to making Italian cuisine. In fact, making an Indian curry is a lot like making an Italian tomato sauce.

— **MEERU DHALWALA, VIJ’S (VANCOUVER)**

If my mind is in **India**, tamarind will be sneaking its way into the dish. When thinking of India, my inspirations are the flavors of clove, cardamom, and coriander seed. They are aromatic spices that really cut the fat of the dish, so it is not big, fat, and flabby on the palate.

— **BRAD FARMERIE, PUBLIC (NEW YORK CITY)**

I worked in an **Indian** restaurant as a waiter for four years. I love cooking with Indian ingredients. Everything I learned at the CIA was thrown out the window when I learned Indian cooking, which is where I picked up many techniques and philosophies. I now roast my own spices and create spice blends. I love creating my own flavor combinations. I came to love a garam masala made with fennel, cinnamon, clove, cumin, and coriander. Each of these five spices has a distinctive flavor, but combined they create one single flavor that is amazing. I will use my garam masala mixture in soups and sauces. When people ask about the dish, they always ask, “What was that flavor?”

— **BOB IACOVONE, CUVÉE (NEW ORLEANS)**

**AVOID**

- beef, for religious reasons, say some
- pork, for religious reasons, say some

**Flavor Affinities**

- cinnamon + cloves + mace + nutmeg
- coriander + cumin + turmeric
- coriander + cumin + yogurt
- cumin + garlic + ginger
- cumin + garlic + yogurt
- garlic + ginger
- garlic + ginger + onion
- potatoes + chili powder + turmeric
- yogurt + fruit

**INDONESIAN CUISINE**

- chicken
- chile peppers
- coconut
- coriander
- fish
- garlic
- grilled dishes
- lemongrass
- molasses
- noodles
- peanuts
- pepper
- rice
- shellfish
- shrimp paste
- soy sauce
- spices, esp. clove, nutmeg, pepper
- stir-fried dishes
- sugar, brown
- vegetables

**Flavor Affinities**

- chile peppers + peanuts + soy sauce
- garlic + peanuts + soy sauce
- garlic + soy sauce + brown sugar
**IRANIAN CUISINE**  
(aka Persian Cuisine)

- apricots
- basil
- beans
- chicken
- cinnamon
- dates
- dill
- duck
- fish
- garlic
- herbs
- kebabs
- lamb
- lime
- meats
- mint
- nuts
- onions
- parsley
- plums
- pomegranates
- prunes
- raisins
- rice
- saffron
- stews

**Flavor Affinities**

- cardamom + cinnamon + cloves + cumin + ginger + rose
- duck + pomegranates + walnuts

---

**ITALIAN CUISINE, NORTHERN**

- asparagus
- basil
- beans
- butter
- cheeses, creamy and rich
- **cream and cream-based sauces**
- cured meats
- fish
- goat
- hazelnuts
- lemon, juice
- Marsala
- nuts
- pasta, esp. richer egg-based and/or ribbon-shaped, often combined with other starches such as beans
- pine nuts
- polenta
- potatoes
- **rice and risotto**
- truffles, white
- vinegar, esp. wine
- wine

**ITALIAN CUISINE, SOUTHERN**

- bell peppers
- chile peppers
- cinnamon
- eggplant
- fennel
- garlic
- marjoram
- nutmeg
- olive oil, heavy
- oregano
- pasta, esp. tube-shaped and with tomato sauce
- pizza
- pork
- raisins
- red pepper flakes
- sardines
- sausage
- tomatoes and tomato sauces

---

**ITALIAN CUISINE — IN GENERAL**

- anchovies
- artichokes
- basil
- beef
- bell peppers
- capers
- cheese: mozzarella, Parmesan, pecorino, ricotta
- chicken
- eggplant
- fennel
- fish

**Flavor Affinities**

- anchovies + capers + lemon juice + cumin + garlic + ginger + rose
- bell peppers + olive oil + tomatoes + capers + garlic + wine vinegar
- garlic + olive oil + parsley + red pepper flakes + truffles, white
I only half joke that if you add rum or orange zest to a dessert, it will taste Italian. They are very common flavors in Italy.
— GINA DEPALMA, BABBO (NEW YORK CITY)

There are five ingredients that any Italian cook must use: 1) real Italian pasta; 2) extra-virgin olive oil; 3) real balsamic vinegar; 4) Italian prosciutto; and 5) Parmigiano-Reggiano cheese.
— MARIO BATALI, BABBO (NEW YORK CITY)

Holly Smith of Café Juanita in Seattle on Five Flavors that Will Take You to Northern Italy

White Truffles. The perfect vehicle for white truffles is hand-cut pasta that is egg rich. Eggs that taste like real eggs make a great pasta. Our pasta is egg rich and has 35 egg yolks to a kilo (2.2 pounds) of flour. You can get them in there, it is crazy! The pasta looks like a sunset. On the pasta, I would first put butter barely scented with sage, before shaving the truffles on top.

Nebbiolo. Beef cheeks braised in Nebbiolo [wine]. To keep it simple, we serve roasted turnips and the reduced sauce with pomegranate seeds and that's it. We braise our cheeks for seven and a half hours. Most braised dishes go four hours, but not beef cheeks — anything less, and they are [still tough].

Anchovies. I love a really acidic anchovy vinaigrette for a bread salad. Anchovies with roasted garlic are like butter at this restaurant; they go in lots of dishes. We put them in lamb, we put them in between potatoes with chicken stock for a gratin. We love them. I like anchovies with sage on each side deep fried for an appetizer. We cook anchovies in olive oil with a little butter until they get toasty, throw in onions to caramelize, and serve this with fish.

Hazelnuts. Chocolate and hazelnut is the perfect combination so we make gianduia and put it inside crepes and warm them and put chestnut honey on top. Most of the time hazelnuts end up in salad or ground for a final dusting for a pasta. Beet pasta that looks like candy wrappers is served on top of a warm plate that has just been smeared with Gorgonzola Piccante, then topped with ground hazelnuts just before it is served. Blue cheese and hazelnuts is it for me.

Goat Meat. I just had spit-roasted goat at Da Cesare. If I knew I was going to die, I would get myself there [to the Piedmont region of Italy]. Roasted goat basted with garlic, olive oil, marjoram, mint, or rosemary is it.
Japanese cuisine is very simple. We don’t mix too many ingredients together. One of the main ingredients we use in Japanese cooking is soy sauce, for both its saltiness and umami. Soy sauce is very complex: It takes months and months to make it. Same for the dried bonito used to make dashi, our Japanese broth. So Japanese chefs find that much of the hardest work has already been done for us!

— KAZ OKOCHI, KAZ SUSHI BISTRO (WASHINGTON, DC)
Flavor Affinities
jicama + avocado + grapefruit + pumpkin seeds
jicama + chili powder + lime juice

JUNIPER BERRIES
Season: summer–autumn
Character: refreshing
Taste: bitter
Weight: medium
Volume: moderate–loud

Flavor Affinities
juniper berries + game + garlic + rosemary

KAFFIR LIMES AND KAFFIR LIME LEAF
(See also Lemons, Limes, etc.)
Season: year-round
Taste: sour
Weight: light
Volume: moderate–loud
Techniques: stir-fry

I love the gentle, mellow tanginess kaffir lime leaf adds to curries.
— MEERU DHALWALA, VIJ’S (VANCOUVER)
I like kale blanched then sautéed with some onions, a pinch of salt, and some smoked sausage.
— GABRIEL KREUTHER, THE MODERN (NEW YORK CITY)

custard
grapefruit
hazelnuts
honey
Kirsch
lemon: juice, zest
lime
lychee
macadamia nuts
mangoes
oranges
papaya
passion fruit
pineapple
rum
salad, esp. chicken or fruit
strawberries
sugar
wine: Champagne, ice wine

KOHLRABI (See also Rutabagas, Turnips)
Season: summer–autumn
Botanical relatives: broccoli, Brussels sprouts, cabbage, cauliflower, collard greens, kale
Weight: medium (esp. when younger)—heavy (esp. when older)
Volume: moderate (esp. when younger)—loud (esp. when older)
Techniques: boil, steam, stir-fry

allicepice
basil
butter, unsalted
cabbage
carrots
celery
celery leaves or seeds
celery root
cheese, esp. Parmesan, Swiss
chervrel
cilantro
Kohlrabi is an underrated vegetable. I admit it has not always been one of my favorites, but it has grown on me over the years. Now, I love it. I can’t precisely place its flavor, which is somewhere between a turnip, radish, and cauliflower. But it tastes great and is really versatile. You can grill it, roast it, glaze it like a carrot, or make a gratin out of it with potatoes. We have even grated it and made a rémoulade out of it like you would with a celery root. But the best way to enjoy kohlrabi is grilled, roasted, and drizzled with olive oil and sea salt. That is my favorite!

— VITALY PALEY, PALEY’S PLACE (PORTLAND, OREGON)

coriander
cream
dill
fennel leaves or seeds
garlic
horseradish
leeks
lemon, juice
lovage
mace
mustard (e.g., Dijon)
mustard seeds
onions
parsley, flat-leaf
pepper, black
potatoes
rosemary
salt, esp. sea
sesame oil, seeds
soups
sour cream
soy sauce
stews
tamari
turmeric
vinegar, red wine

KOREAN CUISINE
chile peppers
dish
endive (Belgian)
fish, esp. cod, halibut, red snapper, salmon, tuna, esp. grilled
ginger
hazelnuts
honey
lemon, juice
lime
mace
mango
marinades
meats
mint
nutmeg
olive oil
onions, spring
orange
papaya
pecans
persimmons
pineapple
pistachios
pomegranates
poppy seeds
pork
pumpkin
quince
rum
SALADS: FRUIT, GREEN
safflower, saffron
sage
salt
strawberries
sugar
vanilla
walnuts
wine, white

Flavor Affinities
chile peppers + garlic + soy sauce
chile peppers + sesame seeds + soy sauce
chile peppers + soy sauce
garlic + sesame seeds + soy sauce
garlic + soy sauce

KUMQUATS
Season: autumn-winter
Taste: sour, bitter
Weight: light-medium
Volume: moderate–loud
Techniques: raw, stew
Asian cuisines
beef
berries: cranberries, strawberries
brandy
caramel
cayenne
chicken
cocoa: dark, white
chutney
cinnamon
citrus
doconut
cranberries
cream
custard
dates
duck
East Asian cuisine
LAMB — IN GENERAL

Season: spring
Taste: sweet, astringent
Function: heating
Weight: heavy
Volume: moderate—loud
Techniques: braise (esp. shanks), grill (esp. leg), roast (esp. leg), stew (esp. shoulder)
Tips: Cloves add richness to the flavor of lamb.

Our signature wine-marinated lamb popsicles in fenugreek cream curry on spinach potatoes dish is bare rugged simplicity. You have rack of lamb that has been cooked just a few minutes. Then you have a simple sauce that is essentially just cream and garlic — and you can taste all three. We add some green fenugreek that gives an earthiness to the dish and takes it to a whole new level. It is incredibly simple. It is a dish about technique because if the garlic is cooked too long, it gets bitter. Or if you add too much fenugreek, it gets bitter and overpowers the cream. But in the right proportions, it is perfect.

— MEERU DHALWALA, VIJ'S (VANCOUVER)
aioli
almonds
anchovies
apples
apricots, dried
artichokes
asparagus
bacon
basil
bay leaf
beans: cranberry, fava, FLAGEOLETS, green, WHITE
beer
bell peppers
brandy
bread crumbs
bulgur wheat
butter: clarified, unsalted
capers
cardamom
carrots
cayenne
celery
celery root
chard
cheese: blue, feta, Parmesan, ricotta
chickpeas
chiles: jalapeño, red
chili powder
chives
chocolate, dark
cilantro
cinnamon
cloves
coconut
cognac
coriander
couscous
cream
cumin
curry powder
dates
dill
Eastern Mediterranean (e.g., Greek, Turkish) cuisine
eggplant
endive
escarole

Dishes
Lamb, Fig, Pernod, and a Pillow of Sassafras Air
— Grant Achatz, Alinea (Chicago)

Lamb with Stew of Chickpeas, Root Vegetables, and Braised Lettuces
— Dan Barber, Blue Hill at Stone Barns (Pocantico Hills, New York)

Mint Love Letters with Spicy Lamb Sausage
— Mario Batali, Babbo (New York City)

Grilled Lamb Sirloin in a Roasted Garlic Sauce with Potato–Celery Root Gratin and Sautéed Escarole
— Ann Cashion, Cashion's Eat Place (Washington, DC)

Colorado Rack of Lamb with Roasted Fennel, Glazed Baby Carrots, Fresh Garbanzo Beans, and Cardoon Puree, Niçoise Olive–Kumquat Tapenade
— Traci Des Jardins, Jardinière (San Francisco)

Colorado Lamb Loin with Creamy Polenta, Morel Mushrooms, and Star Route Fava Beans, Perigord Truffle Jus
— Traci Des Jardins, Jardinière (San Francisco)

Roast Lamb Sirloin on Crispy Goat Cheese Polenta with Saffron-Braised Baby Vegetables and Minted Yogurt
— Brad Farmerie, Public (New York City)

"Armenian Style" Lamb Skewers, Mediterranean Chickpea Salad, "Panisses," and Minted Sheep's Milk Yogurt
— Carrie Nahabedian, Naha (Chicago)

Poached Spring Lamb with Artichoke Tart and Pine Nut–Morel Gremolata
— Bradley Ogden, at the 2003 James Beard Awards gala reception

Moroccan Spiced Rack of Lamb with Couscous Salad, Roasted Eggplant, Lemon–Black Pepper Jus
— Alfred Portale, Gotham Bar and Grill (New York City)

Pan-Roasted Lamb Rack and Eighteen-Hours-Braised Leg of Lamb; Goat Cheese Mashed Potatoes; Wild Mushroom–Red Wine Sauce
— Eric Ripert, Le Bernardin (New York City)

Lamb Black Truffle Tagliatelle with Preserved Lemon and Aged Parmesan
— Eric Ripert, Le Bernardin (New York City)

Truffle and Almond-Crusted Rack of Lamb
— Brad Thompson, Mary Elaine's at the Phoenician (Scottsdale, Arizona)

Wine-Marinated Lamb Popsicles in Fenugreek Cream Curry on Spinach Potatoes
— Vikram Vij and Meeru Dhalwala, Vij's (Vancouver)
I work with a local lamb farmer in the Willamette Valley who has true spring lamb in the spring. We have a spit and every Friday night we roast a whole lamb. I am a big fan of lamb shoulder. It can take a beating and in the end come out glorious tasting! There is an old French technique where they cook ham in hay. The hay is submerged in water; then they put the ham on it to cook. It is amazing. We adapted this technique to the lamb. We had our farmer collect the hay and grass in the field where the lamb grazed with the thinking that this is what the lamb actually ate. We then dry the hay by letting it sit out overnight on a tray, so it becomes really butterscotchy and barnyardy. You can use any hay for this technique but I’m just a purist.

We brine a boneless shoulder of lamb for 24 hours in a brining solution of 1 cup of salt and ¼ cup of sugar in a gallon of water, [adding] some peppercorns, bay leaf, a couple of cardamom pods, a cinnamon stick, and cumin. The brine is brought to a boil, cooled down, and the lamb goes in. After the brining we rub the lamb with garlic and summer savory and tie it up into a log and put it on the bed of hay, drizzle it with white wine, cover it, and put it in the oven. It is nature going back on itself. The lamb ate the hay, the hay makes the lamb taste better. When it’s cooked, the flavors are intense but pleasant and it becomes something else. When lavender is in season, I’ll throw some in the hay as well and it is delicious.

With the lamb I like to serve a stuffed tomato Provençal [typically a combination of basil, bread crumbs, garlic, olive oil]. You want to serve something simple. You could also serve a crushed potato with savory and olive oil or a medley of vegetables.

— VITALY PALEY, PALEY’S PLACE (PORTLAND, OREGON)
Flavor Affinities

- Lamb + broccoli rabe + Parmesan cheese
- Lamb + cardamom + yogurt
- Lamb + carrots + ginger + pistachios
- Lamb + carrots + lentils + parsley
- Lamb + chickpeas + garlic
- Lamb + chocolate + cinnamon + cloves
- Lamb + cilantro + dill + garlic + mint
- Lamb + cinnamon + dried apricots + preserved lemons + walnuts
- Lamb + cinnamon + garlic + lemon + mint + onion + oregano
- Lamb + cinnamon + prunes
- Lamb + clove + red wine
- Lamb + cream + fenugreek + garlic
- Lamb + cucumber + mint + tomatoes
- Lamb + escarole + lemon
- Lamb + fava beans + thyme
- Lamb + fennel + onions + turnips
- Lamb + flageolet beans + thyme
- Lamb + garlic + flageolet beans
- Lamb + garlic + olives
- Lamb + garlic + rosemary
- Lamb + mint + mustard
- Lamb + mint + olives
- Lamb + mint + parsley
- Lamb + mint + peas + risotto
- Lamb + mint + ricotta cheese
- Lamb + mint + tomatoes

LAMB, CHOPS

**Techniques:** broil, grill, sauté

- anchovies
- beans (e.g., fava)
- bell peppers, red
- broccoli, rabe
- butter, unsalted
- capers
- carrots
- cayenne
- chard
- cheese, feta
- cilantro
- cumin
- curry
- fennel
- garam masala
- garlic
- ginger

- honey
- leeks
- lemon
- lime
- mace
- mint
- miso
- mushrooms
- mustard, Dijon
- nutmeg
- oil: canola, peanut
- olive oil
- olives, black

**Latin American cuisine** is very Mediterranean. It’s based on what was brought over from Spain and Italy. You’ll see the combination of garlic, onions, and peppers like you’ll see in Spain and Italy, not to mention the same pantry of herbs and spices: cilantro, cinnamon, cloves, cumin, oregano, rosemary, thyme.

— MARICEL PRESILLA, ZAFRA (HOBOKE, NEW JERSEY)
mixed grilled meats
onions
orange
oregano
peppers
pork
potatoes
rice
rosemary
sausages
seafood
tarragon
thyme
vegetables
blueberries
cheese, ricotta
cherries
CHICKEN
CREAM AND ICE CREAM
crème fraîche
currants, black
custards
desserts
duck
figs
French cuisine
fruit and fruit preserves
game birds
ginger
herbes de Provence (occasional ingredient)
HONEY
LAMB
lemon
lemonade
marjoram
mascarpone
meats (e.g., beef, lamb, steak)
milk
mint
onions
orange
oregano
parsley
peaches
pistachios
plums
pork
potatoes
Provençal cuisine
quail
rabbit
ras el hanout (key ingredient)
raspberries
rhubarb
rice
rosemary
savory
spearmint
stews
strawberries
sugar
te, esp. black
thyme
vanilla
vinegar, balsamic
walnuts
Flavor Affinities
lavender + cream + sugar
lavender + meat + salt
LEEPS
Season: autumn–spring
Taste: sweet
Botanical relatives: chives, garlic, onions, shallots
Weight: light–medium
Volume: quiet
Techniques: boil, braise, fry, grill, roast, steam
Tips: Add early in cooking process.
anchovies
bacon
barley
bay leaf
beef
bouillabaisse
butter, unsalted
capers
caraway
carrot
cauliflower
celery
cheese: cheddar, goat, Gruyère, Parmesan
chervil

Lavender works with plums or peaches.
— JERRY TRAUNFELD, THE HERBFARM (WOODINVILLE, WASHINGTON)

Lavender and rosemary work in butter cakes, cookies, and other baked goods.
— JERRY TRAUNFELD, THE HERBFARM (WOODINVILLE, WASHINGTON)

I like very little lavender with quail for its savory aroma, but the key phrase is “very little” — or else it's like eating a piece of soap!
— SHARON HAGE, YORK STREET (DALLAS)
We have lemon juice right next to the salt when we cook. Acid is the most important aspect of how a dish tastes — whether it is there as subtle punctuation or an exclamation point!
— Sharon Hage, York Street (Dallas)

Lemon zest adds a totally different dynamic than lemon juice. If you are making an apple crisp, if you added a teaspoon of zest it would taste very different than if you added lemon juice. The juice would make it taste tart, whereas the zest would actually add a lemon flavor component to it. For ice cream, custards, and tarts, use lemon juice. But if you are going to combine lemon with other flavors, that’s when you use zest.
— Emily Luchetti, Farallon (San Francisco)

Use lemon juice when you want the acid and lemony flavor of the juice. If you want the perfume of the lemon, use the zest because the skin is where you get the essential oils. I use more lemon and orange than vanilla in my cooking because they are more prevalent in Italy and in Italian cooking, and a flavor profile that people recognize as Italian.
— Gina DePalma, Babbo (New York City)

Lemon can be used by itself or with other ingredients because it enhances so many flavors. An orange can be a little too mellow, but lemon makes flavors much brighter. Lemon is an underlying flavor as much as the star. If there is one fruit you had to always have on hand as a basic staple, it is lemon.
— Emily Luchetti, Farallon (San Francisco)
LEMONS (CONT.)

apples
apricots
artichokes
bananas
basil
bay leaf
beef
berries

beverages
blackberries
blueberries
butter, unsalted
buttermilk
capers
caramel
cardamom
cayenne
cheese: goat, ricotta
cherries
chervil
chestnuts
chicken
chives
chocolate: dark, white

cinnamon
coconut
coffee
crab
cranberries
cream / milk
cream cheese
crème fraiche
custard
dates
desserts
duck
figs: fresh, dried

FISH

GARLIC

gin
ginger
gooseberries
grapefruit
grapes

Greek cuisine

guava

hazelnuts

HONEY

kiwi fruit

lamb

lemongrass

lemon verbena

lime

liqueurs: nut, orange (e.g.,

Cointreau, curaçao, Grand

Marnier)
mango

maple syrup

mascarpone

Mediterranean cuisines

Middle Eastern cuisines

mint (garnish)

Moroccan cuisine

mustard, Dijon
**Dishes**

Ricotta-Lemon Pancakes with Blackberries and Honeycomb Butter
— Andrew Carmellini, A Voce (New York City)

---

**LEMONS, PRESERVED**

*Taste:* sour  
*Weight:* light-medium  
*Volume:* moderate-loud

- cinnamon  
- cloves  
- lamb  

**MOROCCAN CUISINE**

- nigella seeds  
- saffron

We churn through preserved lemons! In the middle of the summer, we buy cases so that we can age them eight months before we use them. After six months, they are great. After eight months or a year, you see God. They become incredible just by waiting those extra few months. I make preserved lemons by feel. I primarily use salt and will add some cinnamon, clove, nigella, a tiny, tiny bit of saffron, and then just tuck them away in the refrigerator. If I wasn’t so greedy, I would give them away, but we are talking a year of my life here!

— BRAD FARMERIE, PUBLIC (NEW YORK CITY)

When you are using different kinds of lemons, you need to treat them as different things. A Meyer lemon is different from a regular lemon. If you are using a Meyer lemon, you may want the perfume, aroma, and subtlety of it. Yet when you taste it, you may want to add a touch of regular lemon to give it a little more acidity and a little kick.

— EMILY LUCCHETTI, FARALLON (SAN FRANCISCO)

We get a lot of Meyer lemons in during the season, and they have a lovely sweet-orangey lemon flavor. But there are times that they are simply too sweet and we have to either add regular lemon or some lime to balance the Meyer lemon.

— MONICA POPE, T’AFIA (HOUSTON)

---

**Flavor Affinities**

lemon + berries + crème fraîche  
lemon + blackberries + honey + ricotta cheese

---

**LEMONS, MEYER**

*Season:* autumn-spring  
*Taste:* sour–sweet  
*Weight:* light  
*Volume:* moderate-loud

- cream  
- grapefruit  
- honey  
- lemon  
- lime  
- orange  
- sugar  
- vanilla

---

**SHELLFISH**

- sour cream  
- stock, chicken

**SUGAR:** brown, white

---

**Dishes**

Meyer Lemon Cream Pie with Roasted Strawberries, Candied Coconut, Vanilla Chantilly
— Emily Luchetti, pastry chef, Farallon (San Francisco)
LEMON BALM
Season: spring–autumn
Taste: sour
Weight: light–medium
Volume: quiet–moderate

Tips: Add near end of cooking process; use in stir-fries.

basil
beef
chicken
chile peppers: red, green
chives
cilantro
cinnamon
cloves
coconut and coconut milk
coriander
crab
cream
curries
FISH
fruits
galangal
garlic
ginger
honey
Indonesian cuisine
lime, juice
lobster
Malaysian cuisine
meats
mint
noodles, rice
offal
onions
parsley
peanuts
pork
poultry
sage
salads and salad dressings
scallions
shallots
SHELLFISH
shrimp
soups, esp. chicken or turkey
Southeast Asian cuisines
spring rolls
stews
teas
THAI CUISINE
turmeric

vanilla
vegetables
Vietnamese cuisine
vinaigrettes

Flavor Affinities
lemongrass + chives + mint
lemongrass + cilantro + mint
lemongrass + cream + vanilla

LEMON THYME
Taste: sour
Weight: light
Volume: moderate–loud

asparagus
basil
bay leaf
beets
beverages (e.g., herbal teas)
bouillabaisse
carrots
chicken, esp. roasted
chives
eggs
fennel
figs
fish
fruits
ginger
halibut
lamb
marjoram
meats
mint
orange
parsley
potatoes
poultry
rabbit
rosemary
sage
salads: fruit, green
seafood
shellfish
sole
spinach
stews

LEMON BASIL
Taste: sour
Weight: light
Volume: moderate

apricots
berries
cinnamon
desserts
fish
peaches
seafood
shellfish
soups
vegetables

LEMONGROGRASS
Taste: sour
Weight: light
Volume: moderate–loud

Southeast Asian cuisines
spring rolls
stews
teas
THAI CUISINE
turmeric

vanilla
vegetables
Vietnamese cuisine
vinaigrettes
Lemon verbena is amazing. I love to make a lemon verbena syrup and then poach apricots in it. It is so refreshing! We also make our own soda here, and lemon verbena is great in soda.

— JOHNNY IZZINI, JEAN GEORGES (NEW YORK CITY)

stocks and broths: fish, seafood
stuffings
veal
vegetables, esp. spring

LEMON VERBENA

Taste: sour
Weight: light
Volume: loud

anise hyssop
apricots
baked goods (e.g., cakes, shortbread)
basil
beets
berries
beverages
blueberries
butter, unsalted
carrots
cherries
chicken
chile peppers
chives
cilantro
cinnamon
cream and ice cream
crème fraîche
currants, red
custards
desserts
fish
fruits
garlic
ginger
grapes
honey
lamb
lavender
lemon, juice
lemonade
lemongrass
lemon thyme
lime, juice
melon
milk
mint
mushrooms
nectarines
peaches
peas
plums
raspberries
rice
salads, fruit and green
salt
sour cream
strawberries
sugar
tamarind
tea, green
zucchini

Flavor Affinities
lemon verbena + apricots + sugar

A drizzle of sherry vinegar just before you serve lentils elevates them to another level.

— JOSÉ ANDRÉS, CAFÉ ATLÁNTICO (WASHINGTON, DC)

I like lentils for soup with a smoked ham hock. For seasoning the soup, I recommend thyme, bay leaf, and a pinch of cumin. You can add bacon or sausage, or serve it with potato galettes on the side.

— GABRIEL KREUTHER, THE MODERN (NEW YORK CITY)

LENTILS

Season: winter
Taste: sweet-stringent
Function: cooling
Weight: medium
Volume: moderate
Techniques: simmer
Tips: Green lentils are more flavorful than brown or red.

apples: cider, juice
bacon
BAY LEAF
bell peppers, esp. red
bouquet garni
bread and croutons
butter, unsalted
cardamom
CARROTS
cayenne
CELEY
celery root
cheese, goat
chervil
chile peppers: dried red, fresh green
chives (garnish)
cilantro
cinnamon
cloves
coconut

dishes

Green Lentil Soup with Black Truffle, Smoked Quail, Crispy Shallots
— Daniel Boulud, Daniel (New York City)

Lentil Stew with Blood Sausage, Chorizo, or Ham with a Poached Egg on Top
— Alexandra Raij, Tia Pol (New York City)
LENTILS (CONT.)

cornichons
cream
cumin, esp. seeds
curry; leaves, powder, sauces
dill
eggplant
French cuisine
game birds, roasted (e.g., quail)
GARLIC
ginger
ham and ham hocks
honey
Indian cuisine
leek
lemons, juice
lime, juice
meats
Mediterranean cuisine
mint, esp. spearmint
mirepoix (esp. for soups)
mustard, Dijon
mustard seeds, black
OIL: hazelnut, peanut, vegetable,
walnut
olive oil
ONIONS, esp. red, white, yellow
oregano
PARSLEY, flat-leaf
PEPPER: black, white
pineapple
pork
poultry, roasted (e.g., chicken)
prosciutto
SALMON
SALT: kosher
sausage, esp. smoked
scallions
shallots
sorrel, esp. with green lentils
soups
soy sauce
spinach
squash, winter (e.g., butternut)
STOCKS: chicken, vegetable
thyme
tomatoes
turmeric

turnips
VINEGAR: balsamic, red wine,

sherry
walnuts
wine, red
zucchini

Flavor Affinities

lentils + bacon + bell pepper +
cumin + garlic
lentils + bacon + garlic + sherry

vigor

lentils + bay leaf + onions + thyme
lentils + cumin + turmeric
lentils + olive oil + parsley + sorrel

LETTUCES —
IN GENERAL
Season: spring—autumn
Function: cooling
Weight: light—medium
Volume: quiet—loud

apples
bacon
basil
bread, breadsticks, croutons, etc.
capers
cheese (e.g., feta)
chicories, aka bitter greens
dill
eggs, esp. hard-boiled
fennel leaves
garlic
lemon, juice
mint
mushrooms
mustard, Dijon
nuts

Bibb lettuce is a light, delicate, and almost creamy lettuce, so I serve it
with a creamy dressing to mimic that creaminess. Because of its
delicacy, to make the mayonnaise I’ll use a neutral oil that’s a blend of
80 percent canola and 20 percent olive. It finds a counterpoint in
lemon and fines herbes, and gets a note of freshness, crunch, and
spicy heat from radishes.
— TONY LIU, AUGUST (NEW YORK CITY)
shallots
tarragon
vinaigrette
watercress
yogurt

**LETTUCES — BITTER GREENS AND CHICORIES** (See Arugula, Escarole, Frisée, Radicchio)

**Season:** spring
**Taste:** bitter
**Weight:** light–medium
**Volume:** medium–loud

bacon
basil
beans, esp. "fresh shell"
butter
cheese: Asiago, Gruyère, Parmesan
cilantro
cream
eggs, hard-boiled
garlic

lemon, juice
lemon balm
nuts
olives
**olive oil**
onions, yellow
pancetta
parsley
pasta
red pepper flakes
rices
salt, kosher
scallions
shallots

**LETTUCES — MESCLUN GREENS** (i.e., mixed baby lettuces) (See also Lettuces — Bitter Greens and Chicories)

**Season:** spring
**Taste:** bitter
**Weight:** light
**Volume:** moderate

sugar
thyme
vinegar: balsamic, red wine, white
walnuts

---

**Dishes**

Hearts of Romaine and Treviso Radicchio with Spanish Serrano Ham, Manchego Cheese, White Anchovies, Fire-Roasted Peppers, and Crisp Capers
— Carrie Nahabedian, Naha (Chicago)

Caesar Salad Soup
— Nobiyuki Sugie, Asiate (New York City)

Leaves of Romaine, Creamy Garlic Dressing, Red Onions, Capers, and Parmesan
— Cory Schreiber, Wildwood (Portland, Oregon)
basil
cheese, goat
chervil
chives
confit (e.g., duck)
French cuisine
hazelnuts
lemon, juice
mushrooms, wild (e.g., morels)
olive oil
parsley, flat-leaf
pecan
pepper, black
salt
shallots
tarragon
vinaigrettes

Flavor Affinities
mesclun greens + goat cheese + hazelnuts

LETTUCE, ROMAINE
Season: spring–autumn
Taste: sweet, bitter
Weight: light
Volume: quiet

anchovies
avocados
bell peppers: green, red
butter
Caesar salad
capers
cayenne
CHEESE: feta, dry Jack, Monterey Jack, Parmesan, Stilton
chervil
chile peppers: jalapeño, serrano
chives
cilantro
cream
crème fraîche
croutons
cucumbers
eggs, yolk
GARLIC
grapefruit

hamster
leeks
lemon, juice
lime: juice, zest
lovage
mayonnaise
mustard, Dijon
OIL: canola, vegetable
OLIVE OIL
olives, kalamata
onions, esp. red
parsley, flat-leaf
pepper: black, white
salt: kosher, sea
shallots
sour cream
stocks: chicken, vegetable
tarragon
tomatoes
vinaigrette
VINEGAR: balsamic, cider,
raspberry, red wine, sherry,
white wine
walnuts
Worcestershire sauce

Flavor Affinities
romaine + anchovies + Parmesan
cheese
romaine + capers + garlic +
Parmesan cheese + red onions

LIMES
Season: year-round
Taste: sour

Acidity awakens flavors. I love lime, and just a squeeze of lime on
seafood soup or Thai soup awakens it.
— KATSUYA FUKUSHIMA, MINIBAR (WASHINGTON, DC)

Dishes

Key Lime Cheesecake with Macadamia Nut Crust, Lime Caramel, Key Lime Curd
— Emily Luchetti, pastry chef, Farallon (San Francisco)

Grilled Lime Pound Cake with Crème Fraîche–Tapioca Pudding, Blueberry Gelée, and
Burnt Honey Ice Cream
— Celina Tio, American Restaurant (Kansas City)
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>LIMES AND LIME LEAF, KAFFIR (See Kaffir Limes and Kaffir Lime Leaf)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>LIVER, CALF’S</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Taste:</strong> bitter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Weight:</strong> medium–heavy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Volume:</strong> moderate–loud</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Techniques:</strong> braise, broil, grill, sauté</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Tips:</strong> Cook briefly, one minute per side.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>apples</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>arugula</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>avocado</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bacon</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bay leaf</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bouquet garni</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>butter, unsalted</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>carrots</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>celery</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cheese, Parmesan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>chervil</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>chives</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cream</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>figs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>French cuisine</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>garlic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>jasmine</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>lemon, juice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>milk</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>mushrooms</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mustard, Dijon</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>oil, canola</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>olive oil</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>olives, green</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>ONIONS:</strong> fried, red, Vidalia, white</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>orange, zest</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>pancetta</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>parsley, flat-leaf</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>pears</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>pepper: black, white</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>polenta</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>potatoes, mashed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>prunes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>rhubarb</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sage</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>salt, kosher</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sauce, brown butter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sausages</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>shallots</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>spinach</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>stock, chicken</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sugar, brown</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>thyme</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tomatoes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>turnips</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VINEGAR: balsamic, cider, red, wine, sherry, wine: dry red or white</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Flavor Affinities</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>calf’s liver + arugula + onions + pancetta</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>calf’s liver + figs + onions + red wine vinegar</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>LIVER, CHICKEN</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Weight:</strong> medium</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Volume:</strong> moderate–loud</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Techniques:</strong> grill, sauté</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>anchovies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>apples</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bacon</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bay leaf</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>butter, unsalted</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>capers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>chicken fat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>chives</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cilantro</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>eggs, hard-boiled</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>garlic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>kale</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>lemon, juice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>lime, juice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>oil, peanut</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>olive oil</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>ONIONS:</strong> fried, red, sweet (e.g., Vidalia)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>parsley, flat-leaf</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>peanuts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>pepper: black, white</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
radishes
red pepper flakes
rosemary
sage
salt, kosher
shallots
sherry, dry (e.g., fino)
sugar
thyme
vinegar: balsamic, sherry
wine, dry red

caviar
cayenne
celery
celery root
Champagne
cheese: Gruyère, Parmesan
cervil
chile peppers, jalapeño
chili paste
Chinese cuisine
chives
cilantro
cinnamon
cloves
coconut and coconut milk
cognac
coriander
cranberries
crème fraîche
cucumbers
cumin
curry: paste (red), powder

curry leaf
daikon
dill
eggs and egg yolks
endive
fennel
fennel seeds
fenugreek seeds
figs
fish sauce, Thai
foie gras
frisée
GARLIC
ginger, fresh
grapefruit
grapes
guacamole
haricots verts
honey
horseradish
kiwi fruit
kumquats
leeks
LEMON: juice, zest
lemon, Meyer

I love lobster: poached, roasted, or grilled. I like mayonnaise or a vinaigrette with my lobster much more than butter with lobster. In the summertime, I like it with small potatoes and corn. I really like it with cilantro.

For my dish Roasted Maine Lobster in “Folly of Herbs” with Baby Fennel and Salsify, I wanted to do something different with lobster besides a lobster sauce. I make a “tea” of dried herbs: thyme, rosemary, fennel seeds, oregano, sage, mint, and tarragon. This is boiled and strained, then gets a dash of Ricard [also known as Pernod, an anise-flavored liquor]. The lobster gets finished with fresh parsley, mint, and fresh oregano. I chose these two vegetables because salsify is underused and underappreciated. I don’t blanch my salsify in water because when you do, the flavor stays in the water. I roast them and caramelize them a little bit, then deglaze with just a little water with a sprig of thyme and a bay leaf. Baby fennel is good because it plays off the Ricard and fennel. I quickly blanch the fennel and then caramelize it.

— GABRIEL KREUTHER, THE MODERN (NEW YORK CITY)

Cooked lobster meat blends well with mayonnaise, but I don’t think I’d use it with raw lobster — I’d use soy sauce instead.

— KAZ OKOCHI, KAZ SUSHI BISTRO (WASHINGTON, DC)
Dishes

Spaghettini with Spicy Budding Chives, Sweet Garlic, and a One-Pound Lobster
— Mario Batali, Babbo (New York City)

Chilled Maine Lobster: Mango, Fresh Artichoke, and Serrano Ham with a Passion Fruit
and Fresh Coconut Tamarind Dressing
— David Bouley, Bouley (New York City)

Potato Gnocchi with Maine Lobster, Wild Asparagus, Meyer Lemon, and Tarragon
— Traci Des Jardins, Jardinière (San Francisco)

Lobster and Morel Ravioli in Basil Broth, Hazelnuts, and Lobster Oil
— Sandy D’Amato, Sanford (Milwaukee)

Nova Scotia Lobster Poached with Florence Fennel and Chamomile
— Daniel Humm, Eleven Madison Park (New York City)

Warm Lobster Salad, Cauliflower and Watercress Coulis
— Jean Joho, Everest (Chicago)

Butter-Poached Lobster with Sweet Carrot Emulsion
— Thomas Keller, The French Laundry (Yountville, California)

Briny Lobster with Wasabi Mayo
— Kaz Okochi, Kaz Sushi Bistro (Washington, DC)

Maine Lobster Tails Roasted with Fingerling Potatoes, Pea Greens, Whole Garlic, and Fava Beans
— Alfred Portale, Gotham Bar and Grill (New York City)

Martini of Maine Lobster, Cucumber Salad, Belvedere Vodka, and White Sturgeon Caviar
— Thierry Rautureau, Rover’s (Seattle)

Lobster Poached in a Lemon Miso Broth with Shiso and Hon Shimgeji Mushrooms
— Eric Ripert, Le Bernardin (New York City)

Baked Lobster; Braised Endives, with Enoki and Black Trumpet Mushroom with Bourbon-Black Pepper Sauce
— Eric Ripert, Le Bernardin (New York City)

lemon grass
lentils
lime: leaf (kaffir), juice
lobster roe
macaroni and cheese
mace
mâche
mangoes
mascarpone

mayonnaise
Mediterranean cuisine
mint
mirepoix
miso, white
mushrooms: button, cepes, chanterelles, crimini, porcini, shiitake, white, wild
mussels

mustard: dry, seeds
New England cuisine
nutmeg

OIL: canola, corn, grapeseed, hazelnut, peanut, sesame, vegetable, walnut

olive oil
onions, esp. pearl, red, Spanish
orange (juice, zest) and clementine
oyster sauce
papaya
paprika, sweet
parsley, flat-leaf
parsnips
pasta (e.g., macaroni)
peanuts
peas
peas, snow
pepper: black, white
Pernod
pineapple
port
potatoes, esp. fingerling or new
pumpkin
radicchio
red pepper flakes
rhubarb
rice, esp. sticky, and risotto
rosemary
saffron
SALT: kosher, sea, sel gris

sauces, béchamel
scallions
scallops
sea urchin
shallots
shrimp
snow peas
Southern cuisine
soy sauce
spinach
squid
star anise
stocks: chicken, fish, lobster, shellfish, veal, vegetable
Tabasco sauce
tamarind, puree
tarragon
thyme
**TOMATOES**: juice, paste, pulp
truffles: black, juice
vanilla
vermouth, dry
vinaigrette, esp. citrus
**VINEGAR**: red wine, rice wine, sherry, white wine
vodka
wasabi
water chestnuts
watermelon
whiskey
**WINE**: dry to off-dry white (e.g., Gewürztraminer or Riesling), dry red (e.g., Syrah), port
Worcestershire sauce
yuzu juice

---

**LOTUS ROOT**

*Season*: summer–winter
*Taste*: sweet
*Weight*: light–medium
*Volume*: quiet
*Techniques*: fry, raw, simmer, stir-fry

- ginger
- lemon
- lime
- oil, vegetable
- salads
- soups
- soy sauce
- stir-fried dishes
- tempura
- vinegar, rice
- wine, rice

---

**LOVAGE**

*Season*: spring, autumn
*Taste*: sour
*Weight*: light–medium, soft-leaved

Flavor Affinities

- lobster + artichokes + garlic
- lobster + avocado + mayonnaise + tarragon + white wine vinegar
- lobster + bacon + porcini mushrooms
- lobster + basil + hazelnuts + morel mushrooms
- lobster + basil + tomatoes
- lobster + brandy + cream + rosemary
- lobster + brown butter + orange + vanilla
- lobster + butter + garlic + tarragon
- lobster + celery + mayonnaise + black truffles
- lobster + chanterelle mushrooms + parsley + Pernod
- lobster + chanterelle mushrooms + tarragon
- lobster + chive + lemon
- lobster + cilantro + cumin
- lobster + corn + garlic + lemon + potatoes + tarragon
- lobster + fennel + lemon
- lobster + mango + spinach
- lobster + mayonnaise + wasabi
- lobster + orange + soy sauce
- lobster + pasta + peas
- lobster + saffron + vanilla

---

Stinging nettles and **lovage** is a wonderful combination. Stinging nettles are peppery with a green flavor and lovage is celery-like. It's funny: I find nettles without lovage are kind of flat tasting. I will use this combination in a ravioli filling or with local Dungeness crab as a sauce for a soufflé.

— JERRY TRAUNFELD, THE HERBFARM (WOODINVILLE, WASHINGTON)
rabbit
rice
salads, green
sauces
shellfish
sorrel
soups, esp. fish
spinach
stews
tarragon
thyme
tomatoes and tomato juice
veal
vegetables, esp. root
zucchini

Flavor Affinities
lovage + Dungeness crab + stinging nettles
lovage + salmon + tomatoes

LUXURIOUS
caviar, esp. Beluga
Champagne
foie gras
Ibérico ham
Kobe beef
saffron
smoked fish
vanilla
truffles: black, white
wine

LYCHEES
Season: summer
Taste: sweet
Weight: light–medium
Volume: quiet–moderate
Techniques: raw

anise hyssop
berries
blackberries
chicken
chile peppers
cilantro
coconut and coconut milk
cream

strawberries
sugar, esp. palm
vodka
wine: plum, sparkling
yogurt

Flavor Affinities
lychees + ginger + lime
lychees + raspberries + rose

MACADAMIA NUT OIL
(See Oil, Macadamia Nut)

MACADAMIA NUTS
Weight: moderate
Volume: light–medium

apricots
bananas
beets
bourbon
brandy
 caramel
cashews
chicken
chocolate, esp. dark or white
coconut
coffee
 crab
cream
dates
desserts
figs, dried

Our macadamia nut tart, which we serve with banana-rum ice cream, is our take on pecan pie.
— LISSA DOUMANI, TERRA (ST. HELENA, CALIFORNIA)

Macadamia nuts are buttery, rich nuts. I will even pair them with sea scallops, which also have a richness to them. The macadamia nuts don't overwhelm the scallops and I put them in the dish slightly chopped — otherwise, the texture of the nut would be too chewy. We use macadamia nuts on one of the simplest yet most popular dishes on our menu — our jumbo lump crab cake with grilled asparagus and toasted macadamia nuts. Our crab cake is the only recipe we won't give out. It contains no herbs or spices. The only thing that goes in our crab cake is crab, salt, pepper, panko [Japanese bread crumbs], and a little mayonnaise to hold them together. You are the first people to get this recipe!
— MARCEL DESAULNIERS, THE TRELLIS (WILLIAMSBURG, VIRGINIA)
fish (e.g., cod, halibut, mahi-mahi)
ginger
goat cheese
grapefruit
guava
Hawaiian cuisine
honey
kumquats
lamb
lemon
lime
mango
maple syrup
mint
orange
papaya
passion fruit
peaches
pineapple
prunes
raspberries
rum
scallops
sugar, brown
vanilla

**Flavor Affinities**
macadamia nuts + bananas +
caramel + cream
macadamia nuts + beets + goat cheese
macadamia nuts + coconut + lime

**MACE**
*Season:* summer–autumn
*Taste:* pungent, sweet
*Botanical relatives:* nutmeg
*Weight:* light–medium
*Volume:* loud

allspice
Asian cuisine
baked goods (e.g., doughnuts)
beans
broccoli
butter
cabbage
cardamom
carrots
cheese and cheese dishes, esp.
cream
cherry pie
chicken
chocolate
chowders (e.g., fish)
cinnamon
cloves
coriander
cream / milk
cumin
curry (ingredient)
eggs
English cuisine
fish
French cuisine
garam masala (ingredient)
ginger
hazelnuts
Indian cuisine
ketchup (ingredient)
lamb
meats
New England cuisine
NUTMEG
onions
paprika
pastries
pepper
potatoes
pound cake
puddings
pumpkin
salads, fruit
sauces: béchamel, cream, onion
sausages
shellfish, shrimp
soups and consommés
spinach
stuffing
sweet potatoes
thyme
veal

If you go to Japan, you’ll find that virtually all the sushi restaurants put a little ginger and scallion on their mackerel sushi. It cuts its “fishiness” while adding flavor.

— KAZ OKOCHI, KAZ SUSHI BISTRO (WASHINGTON, DC)
apples
artichokes
bay leaf
beets
bell peppers: red, yellow
butter
capers
caraway seeds
caviar
ceviche
chile peppers
chives
cilantro
cinnamon
cloves
coriander
cornichons
cream
crème fraîche
cucumber
cumin
dill
fennel
French cuisine
garlic
ginger
gooseberries
horseradish
LEMON, juice
lemon thyme
lentils
lime, juice
mint (garnish)
miso
mushrooms
mustard, Dijon
mustard seeds
OIL: canola, corn, peanut, sesame, vegetable
olive oil
onions
orange, juice
pancetta
parsley, flat-leaf
PEPPER: black, green, white
red pepper flakes
rosemary
saffron
sake
salmon caviar
salt, sea
scallions
sesame seeds
shallots
sorrel
soy sauce
stocks: chicken, fish
sugar
thyme
VINEGAR: champagne, red wine, sherry, white wine
wine, dry white

**Flavor Affinities**
mackerel + arugula + chickpeas + lemon + rosemary
mackerel + chives + Dijon mustard + lemon juice + shallots + vinegar
mackerel + ginger + scallions
mackerel + onions + thyme

**MAHI MAHI**
*Taste:* sweet
*Weight:* medium-heavy
*Volume:* quiet

Techniques: bake, broil, deep-fry, grill, poach, sauté, steam, stir-fry

- avocado
- cabbage
- cilantro
coriander
- dill
- fruits, esp. tropical
- gin
- juniper berries
- lemon: juice, zest
- orange: juice, zest
- pepper, white
- salt, sea
- sugar

**Dishes**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Flavor Affinities</th>
<th>Dishes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>mahi mahi + avocado + cabbage + cilantro</td>
<td>Taco de Pescado “Baja”: Battered and Deep-Fried Mahi Mahi in Soft Corn Tortillas with Cabbage and Avocado-Cilantro Cream</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**MALT**
*Taste:* sweet
*Weight:* light
*Volume:* moderate

- bananas
- caramel
- chocolate
- cinnamon
- coffee
- cream and ice cream
- nuts
- sugar
- vanilla

**Dishes**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Flavor Affinities</th>
<th>Dishes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>mahi mahi + avocado + cabbage + cilantro</td>
<td>Naha Sundae of Vanilla Malt Ice Cream, Hickory Nut Waffle, Bananas, and Bourbon-Pecan Syrup, Shortbread Cookies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mahi mahi + avocado + cabbage + cilantro</td>
<td>Double-Malted Euphoria with Malted Chocolate, Vanilla Mousse, and Marcona Almond Brittle</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

I love malt. It has a sweetness, breadiness, and graininess to its flavor. It works with the classics like chocolate, vanilla, and caramel.

— MICHAEL LAISKONIS, LE BERNARDIN (NEW YORK CITY)
Mangoes pair well with some of the mixed-milk cheeses such as Robiola Rocchetta and Amarelo da Beira Baixa.

— MAX McCALMAN, ARTISANAL CHEESE CENTER (NEW YORK CITY)
**Maple Syrup**

- **Taste:** sweet, bitter
- **Function:** cooling
- **Weight:** medium-heavy
- **Volume:** moderate–loud

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ingredients</th>
<th>Matchmaking</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Almonds                      | BANANAS
| Anise                        | BLUEBERRIES
| Apples                       | breakfast / brunch
| Apricots                     | butter
| Bacon                        | buttermilk
| Baked goods, e.g., gingerbread | Canadian cuisine
|                              | caramel
|                              | carrots
|                              | chestnuts
|                              | chocolate, esp. dark, white
|                              | cinnamon
|                              | coffee
|                              | corn syrup
|                              | cream
|                              | cream cheese
|                              | custard
|                              | dates
|                              | desserts
|                              | duck
|                              | figs, esp. dried
|                              | foie gras
|                              | French toast
|                              | fruit
|                              | ginger
|                              | ham
|                              | hazelnuts
|                              | ice cream: coffee, vanilla
|                              | lemon, juice
|                              | lime, juice
|                              | macadamia nuts
|                              | MASCARPONE
|                              | nectarines
|                              | New England cuisine
|                              | nutmeg
|                              | NUTS
|                              | oats
|                              | onions
|                              | orange
|                              | pancakes
|                              | peaches
| Pears                        | PECANS
| Pecans                       | persimmons
| Persimmons                   | pineapple
| Plums                        | plums
| Pork ribs                    | prunes
| Prunes                       | pumpkin
| Pumpkin                      |

---

**Matchmaking:** The Charts

213
I typically use **maple syrup** with nuts, like in a pecan pie. I will replace the dark corn syrup in the recipe with maple syrup instead. It is always important to use a very good quality [e.g., Vermont or Canadian] maple syrup. If you are working with syrup and sugar, you need to be careful because the combination of dark brown sugar with maple syrup can become very intense.

--- **EMILY LUCHETTI, FARALLON** (SAN FRANCISCO)

BLiS **maple syrup** is aged in bourbon barrels, and is good enough to drink on its own! I’ll use it with everything from duck breast to foie gras.

--- **BRADFORD THOMPSON, MARY ELAINE’S AT THE PHOENICIAN** (SCOTTSDALE, ARIZONA)

**Dishes**

**Maple and Anise French Toast with Lavender Custard**
— Dominique and Cindy Duby, Wild Sweets (Vancouver)

**Milk Chocolate and Maple Caramel Cake**
— Dominique and Cindy Duby, Wild Sweets (Vancouver)

**Milk Chocolate and Maple Caramel Ice Cream, Caramelized Bananas, and Ginger Tuile**
— Dominique and Cindy Duby, Wild Sweets (Vancouver)

**Flavor Affinities**
maple syrup + blueberries + lemon
maple syrup + butter + chocolate + cream
maple syrup + caramel + pecans
maple syrup + mascarpone + pistachios

**MARJORAM**
*Season:* summer–winter
*Taste:* sweet, spicy
**Botanical relatives:** oregano (which is stronger in flavor than marjoram)
*Weight:* light
*Volume:* quiet–moderate
**Tips:** Add at the end of the cooking process.

artichokes
asparagus
**basil**
bay leaf
beans, esp. green

**Avoid**
sugar, dark brown, as it is too intense with maple syrup

quince
raisins
raspberries
rhubarb
**rum:** dark, light
star anise
strawberries
sweet potatoes
**sugar:** light brown, raw, white
tea
turkey
vanilla
waffles
**WALNUTS**
whiskey
yogurt

beef
beets
bouquet garni (ingredient)
bread
butter
carrots
chard
**cheese:** fresh goat, mozzarella
chicken
chives
chowders
clams
corn
cucumber
delicate-flavored foods (e.g., those “quiet” in Volume)
duck
eggs and egg dishes (e.g., omelets)
**fish**
French cuisine
**fines herbes** (ingredient)
garlic
halibut
Italian cuisine
lamb
**lemon, juice**
lima beans
**meats,** esp. grilled
Mediterranean cuisine
Middle Eastern cuisine
mint
**mushrooms,** esp. wild
North African cuisine
North American cuisine
oil, peanut
olive oil
olives
onions
**oregano**
parsley
**pasta,** esp. macaroni or ravioli
peas
pizza
pork
**potatoes**
poultry
rabbit
Mediterranean herbs marry well. Rosemary and marjoram, or thyme and savory, are naturals together.
— JERRY TRAUNFELD, THE HERBFARM (WOODINVILLE, WASHINGTON)

**MASCARPONE**

**Taste:** sweet  
**Weight:** medium-heavy  
**Volume:** quiet

almonds  
anchovies  
apricots  
arugula  
berries  
biscotti

blackberries  
blueberries  
brandy  
butter  
caramel  
cheese, ricotta  
cherries  
chives  
chocolate, esp. dark  
cinnamon  
cloves  
coffee/expresso  
cream  
cream cheese  
crème fraîche  
currants, red dates  
figs  
fruits, tropical  
ginger  
guava  
hazelnuts  
honey  
Italian cuisine  
Kirsch  
ladyfingers  
lemon: juice, zest  
lime  
maple syrup  
mushrooms  
mustard  
nectarines  
nutmeg  
oats  
orange  
pasta  
peaches  
pears  
pepper, black  
pesto  
pine nuts  
pistachios  
prosciutto  
pumpkin  
quince  
raisins  
raspberries  
rhubarb  
rum  
strawberries  
sugar: raw, white  
truffle oil  
vanilla  
vinegar, balsamic  
walnuts  
wine: red, sweet

**Flavor Affinities**

mascarpone + arugula + truffle oil  
mascarpone + berries + figs  
mascarpone + chocolate + strawberries  
mascarpone + cinnamon + pumpkin  
mascarpone + espresso + ladyfingers (cookies) + sugar  
mascarpone + figs + prosciutto  
mascarpone + maple syrup + pistachios

**Dishes**

Black Mission Figs with Mascarpone Foam and Prosciutto di Parma  
— Rick Tramonto, Tru (Chicago)
MEATS

Tips: Enhance the flavor of meat before (e.g., via brining and marinating), during (e.g., via selecting the best cooking technique), and after cooking (e.g., via condiments and sauces).

MEDITERRANEAN CUISINES (See also French [southern], Italian, Middle Eastern, Moroccan, and Spanish Cuisines)

basil
citrus
garlic
herbs
lemon, juice
marjoram
olive oil
oregano
parsley
rosemary
sage
savory
thyme
tomatoes
vinegar: balsamic, red wine

Flavor Affinities
marjoram + rosemary
savory + thyme

MELO/ MUSKMELONS — IN GENERAL (See also Cantaloupe, Honeydew, etc.)
Season: summer
Taste: sweet
Function: cooling
Weight: light-medium
Volume: moderate
Techniques: raw

apricots
basil
beverages, esp. smoothies
blackberries
blueberries
Champagne
cherries
chile peppers, esp. serrano
chili powder
chili sauce
cilantro
cognac, esp. in cocktails
Cointreau
cream / milk
crème fraîche
cucumbers
curaçao, esp. in cocktails
cured meats (e.g., prosciutto, sopressata)
curry
fennel
ginger
Grand Marnier, esp. in cocktails
grapefruit
grapes
hazelnuts
honey
ices and ice creams
Italian cuisine
Kirsch
kiwi fruit
LEMON, juice
lemon balm
LIME, juice
lychees
macadamia nuts
Madeira
mangoes
Midori liqueur
MINT, esp. spearmint
olive oil
orange
orange-flower water
pears
pecans
pepper: black, white
port
PROSCIUTTO
raspberries
rum
sake
salads, esp. fruit

Tarragon works with muskmelons.
— JERRY TRAUNFELD, THE HERBFARM (WOODINVILLE, WASHINGTON)
salsas, fruit 
salt, kosher 
sambuca 
soups, esp. chilled 
strawberries: fruit, puree 
tarragon 
tequila, esp. in cocktails 
vanilla 

MENU
Tips: Strive for balance over an entire menu, i.e., appetizer, entreé, and dessert. Envision the course of a menu as a piece of music having a melody, rhythm, and tempo.

Three-course menu:

\[ \text{Appetizer} \rightarrow \text{Entrée} \rightarrow \text{Dessert} \]

Tasting menu:

\[ \text{Amuses Bouche} \rightarrow \text{Appetizer} \rightarrow \text{Fish} \rightarrow \text{Meat} \rightarrow \text{Dessert} \]

When planning a menu, pick the dessert or the entrée first and have the other one match it, in terms of style and preparation. If you are doing an entrée that requires last-minute time in the kitchen, don't serve a dessert that requires last-minute time as well. If you have a main course that takes last-minute work, serve a dessert that can be made a day ahead — or if your dessert is what needs last-minute attention, serve it after a stew or lasagna. When deciding what to make, remember: The heavier the main course, the lighter the dessert should be, or vice versa. I was recently going through some of my earlier books and was shocked when I looked at the recipes. One recipe for a chocolate cake that we served at Stars was served in big wedges. I was amazed we used to serve such a huge portion! People can't eat like that anymore. At the same time, the cake is so good I still want to serve it so I work backward. I will serve a chicken or something else light for the main course, not a prime rib of beef.

— Emily Luchetti, Farallon (San Francisco)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>MERLOT</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Weight:</strong> medium</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Volume:</strong> moderate</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- beef 
- cheese, esp. blue and other full-flavored 
- chicken 
- duck 
- lamb 
- meat, red 
- mushrooms 
- pork 
- steak 
- turkey 
- veal

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>MEXICAN CUISINE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>avocados</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>beans</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>beef</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>chicken</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>*CHILE PEPPERS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>chili powder</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>chocolate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cilantro</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cinnamon</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>corn</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cumin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>epazote</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>fried dishes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>garlic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>lemon</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>lime, juice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>nuts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>onions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>orange</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>oregano</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>pork</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>rice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>saffron</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>salsas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>scallions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>seeds</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>squash</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tomatoes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tortillas</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

---
Creating new dishes has to be more than simply intensifying flavors for dishes. In terms of visual presentation, we are shifting into a new direction where the food looks like one thing, but is really something else. That adds an extra element of challenge for us. An example of this would be a [Mexican-inspired] nacho dish we just created. You get something that looks like chips, sour cream, salsa verde, and grated cheese. The cheese is actually grated from saffron ice cream that we have thrown into liquid nitrogen, that is put into a food processor grater. The salsa verde is made from kiwi, mint puree, and epozote to give it a little twist. The sour cream is a yuzu crème fraîche. The chips are made from pureed corn tortilla chips that have been sweetened with powdered sugar, then pasted into triangles and deep fried. So you get something that looks like nachos, but tastes completely different. So we are taking a visual aspect of something you are comfortable with and serving it at the end of a twenty-course meal.

— HOMARO CANTU, MOTO (CHICAGO)

turkey
vanilla
wheat

**Flavor Affinities**
beans + rice
chile peppers + lime
chile peppers + tomatoes
cilantro + lime
cumin
dill
eggplant
fish
fruits, dried
garlic
ginger
goat
honey
lamb
lemons
lemons, preserved
lentils
meats, esp. roasted
mint
nutmeg
nuts
olive oil
olives
onions
oregano
parsley
pepper, black
pine nuts
pistachios
pomegranates
poppy seeds

**MIDDLE EASTERN CUISINE**
almonds
beans, fava
cheese, feta
chicken
chickpeas
cinnamon
cloves
coriander
With mint, applemint is mild, while peppermint is strong.
— JERRY TRAUNFELD, THE HERBFARM (WOODINVILLE, WASHINGTON)

I was actually brought up in the school of thought that put a sprig of mint on every dessert. I am not that guy anymore. I have a saying — “NFG” — which stands for two things at once: “nonfunctional garnishes” are “no fucking good.” If something doesn’t make sense to the dish, it won’t be there. I hate ordering lamb and seeing a huge bunch of rosemary alongside it. Put it in the dish — let me taste it!
— JOHNNY IUZZINI, JEAN GEORGES (NEW YORK CITY)

I love mint flavor, but some cooks started throwing mint on desserts just because they liked the color of it. If you have a gorgeous strawberry shortcake and add some mint to it, one of two things will happen: 1) Either you don’t eat it, so what’s the point of putting it on the plate in the first place, or 2) If you do eat it, that one mint leaf will completely change the balance of the dessert. If you have a lemon tart that is mostly perfectly balanced lemon curd with a little whipped cream and you add a mint leaf to the dessert, the leaf will play havoc with that balance. So don’t throw mint on a plate haphazardly, or you’ll throw off the balance of the entire dessert.
— EMILY LUCHETTI, FARALLON (SAN FRANCISCO)

The first place I think of with mint is Morocco. From there, it is the Middle East. Mint and lamb is such a natural combination, as is mint and yogurt.
— BRAD FARMERIE, PUBLIC (NEW YORK CITY)

I don’t use mint very much, but I have a serious thing for black peppermint! You will see it in one form or another on my menu. I go to the farmers’ market twice a week and use it all summer. It is great with berries. It works best with something light like an infusion or granita. Last summer, we made a tangy lychee gelée that was served under oven-roasted Tristar strawberries tossed lightly with balsamic vinegar. On top of the strawberries, we scooped the black peppermint sorbet.
— JOHNNY IUZZINI, JEAN GEORGES (NEW YORK CITY)
Champagne  
cheese: feta, ricotta  
chicken  
chile peppers (e.g., jalapeño)  
chives  
CHOCOLATE, ESP. DARK, white  
chutneys  
cilantro  
cinnamon  
citrus  
cloves  
coconut  
cocktails: mint julep (ingredient), Pimm's No. 1 Cup (ingredient)  
CREAM AND ICE CREAM  
crème fraîche  
CUCUMBERS  
cumin  
curries  
desserts  
dill  
duck  
eggplant  
Egyptian cuisine  
endive  
fenugreek  
fish  
FRUITS  
fruits, tropical  
garlic  
ginger  
grapefruit  
grapes  
Greek cuisine  
halibut  
honey  
Indian cuisine  
jellies  
kumquats  
*LAMB  
lavender  
lemon  
lemongrass  
lemon verbena  
leptils  
lettuce  
lime  
mango  
marinades  
marjoram  
meats  
Mediterranean cuisine  
melon  
Mexican cuisine  
Middle Eastern cuisine  
milk  
Moroccan cuisine  
mushrooms  
mussels  
nectarines  
olives, black  
onions, esp. red  
orange  
oregano (say some)  
papaya  
paprika  
parsley  
pasta  
peaches, esp. cooked  
pears  
peas, esp. young  
pepper  
pineapple  
plums, esp. cooked  
pork  
potatoes, esp. new  
poultry  
pumpkin  
punches, fruit  
radishes  
raitas  
raspberries  
rice and rice dishes  
rosemary  
sage  
SALADS: bean, fruit, green, vegetable  
salsas  
sea bass  
shellfish  
shrimp  
skate  
soups, esp. bean, cold, and/or fish  
soy sauce  
spinach  
spring rolls, esp. Vietnamese  
squash, summer  
stews, esp. seafood  
strawberries  
SUGAR  
sumac  
tabbouleh (key ingredient)  
tea, esp. Earl Grey, green  
Thai cuisine (e.g., green curries)  
thyme  
tomatoes  
trout  
tuna  
Turkish cuisine  
vanilla  
veal  
vegetables  
Vietnamese cuisine  
vinegar: cider, rice wine  
watermelon  
YOGURT  
zucchini  

AVOID  
oregano (say some)  

Flavor Affinities  
mint + chocolate + cream  
mint + cilantro + dill  
mint + cucumber + lime  
mint + cucumber + vinegar  
mint + cucumber + yogurt  
mint + lamb + yogurt  

MINT, DRIED  
Taste: sweet  
Weight: medium  
Volume: moderate–loud  

beef  
bell peppers  
bold-flavored foods  
cheese, feta  
chicken  
cucumbers  
duck  
Eastern Mediterranean cuisine
MIREPOIX

**Tips:** Use as the base of stocks and soups.

MINT, PEPPERMINT

**Taste:** sweet

**Weight:** light-medium

**Volume:** very loud

**Tips:** Mint suggests “false coolness.”

apples
berries
beverages

candies

carrots
chocolate
citrus
cream and ice cream
DESSERTS

iced desserts (e.g., granita, sorbet)
mangoes

Mediterranean cuisine
milk
strawberries
tea

AVOID

savory foods

MISO AND MISO SOUP

**Weight:** medium-heavy

**Volume:** quiet–moderate

(depending on light or dark miso)

**Techniques:** marinades, sauces, soups

beef

chicken

I like to add *miso* to purees because it adds a rich, buttery flavor and a rich texture. I will serve broiled oysters topped with a puree of miso, pineapple, and serrano chile. I am working on miso-avocado puree as well. It is delicious, but I just haven’t found the right dish for it yet. I am also working with miso-huitlacoche soup with tofu, mushrooms, or corn.

— KATSUYA FUKUSHIMA, MINIBAR (WASHINGTON, DC)

I love *miso*. I went to a Japanese restaurant and loved the miso soup. I realized that it would give more flavor than chicken broth to my onion soup. So now I make a miso broth the night before, let it sit and separate, and use the broth for my onion soup.

— MICHEL RICHARD, CITRONELLE (WASHINGTON, DC)

I will use several different *misos*, depending on the purpose. I might use *saikyo*, a light, yellow, sweet miso, in marinades or with lighter fish like sweet shrimp and scallops that would be overwhelmed by dark miso. Barley miso is a distinctive strong, sweet miso that I’ll use with nigiri with baby squid and shiso. I’ll use wheat miso with foie gras. Sometimes I’ll even mix misos.

— KAZ OKOCHI, KAZ SUSHI BISTRO (WASHINGTON, DC)
Dishes
Roasted Duck Breast with a Red Wine-Miso Sauce
— Gabriel Kreuther, The Modern (New York City)

Alaskan Black Cod with Chinese Broccoli, Homemade Tofu, Black Seaweed, Asian Pear, Miso Broth
— Christopher Lee, Gilt (New York City)

duck
fish: cod, salmon
garlic
ginger
honey
Japanese cuisine
legumes
lemongrass
marinades
mirin
mushrooms
mustard
oysters
pineapple
rice, brown
sake
salad dressings
sauces
sesame oil
soups
soy sauce
steak
stews
stock, chicken
sugar
tofu
vinegar, rice
walnuts

butter, unsalted
cinnamon
cream
ginger
gingerbread
Grand Marnier
lemon, juice
marinades
New England cuisine (e.g., Indian pudding)
orange
pancakes
plums
popcorn
raspberries
sugar, brown
vanilla
walnuts

MONKFISH (See also Fish — In General)
Season: autumn—winter
Weight: medium
Volume: quiet—moderate
Techniques: braise, broil, grill, poach, roast, sauté, stew

Monkfish is great with garlic!
— ERIC RIPERT, LE BERNARDIN (NEW YORK CITY)

MOLASSES
Taste: sweet, bitter
Weight: heavy
Volume: loud

apples
baked goods (e.g., cookies, pies)
barbecue sauce
beans, baked
bread, esp. brown

aioli
apples
apricots, dried
artichokes, Jerusalem
arugula
asparagus
bacon
basil
bay leaf
beans, white
beer, wheat
brandy
bread crumbs
butter: clarified, unsalted
cabbage: green, red, savoy
caperberries
capers
cardamom
carrots
cayenne
celery
chard
chervil
chile peppers
chili powder
chives
cider, hard
cilantro
cinnamon
cams
coriander
couscous
cream
cumin
curry powder

Dishes
Line-Caught Monkfish Loin and “Fresh Bacon” Kurobuta Pork Belly with Golden Chanterelles, Wood-Grilled Leeks, and Herb-Crusted Salsifies, Lobster Red Wine Jus
— Carrie Nahabedian, Naha (Chicago)

Sautéed Monkfish with Broccoli Rabe, Pine Nuts, and Raisins
— David Pasternak, Esca (New York City)

Roasted Monkfish with Spinach, Oyster Ravioli, Watercress Sauce
— Michel Richard, Citronelle (Washington, DC)
Stocks and Broths:
- chicken, clam, fish, shellfish, veal
- striped bass
- Swiss chard
tarragon
thyme
tomatoes
turmeric
vinaigrette
vinegar, white wine
walnuts
watercress

WINE: dry white (e.g., Gewürztraminer), or full-bodied red, dry sherry

Flavor Affinities
- monkfish + aioli + new potatoes
- monkfish + apples + sausage
- monkfish + bacon + cabbage + potatoes
- monkfish + basil + Swiss chard + thyme
- monkfish + curry + mussels + saffron
- monkfish + leeks + mussels
- monkfish + red cabbage + pancetta
- monkfish + white beans + fennel + garlic + saffron + tomatoes

Morels (See Mushrooms, Morels)

Moroccan Cuisine
- almonds
- apricots
- bell peppers, green
- chile peppers
- cilantro
- cinnamon
couscous
coriander
cucumbers
cumin
dates
figs
fruits
ginger
lamb

Flavor Affinities
- lemon, juice

Lemons, Preserved
- nuts
- olive oil
- olives
- onions
- paprika
- pepper
- pine nuts
- pistachios
- raisins
- ras el hanout
- saffron
- salads
- stews, aka tagines
I don't know the first thing about Moroccan cooking other than eating Moroccan food and owning Paula Wolfert's book [Couscous], but I serve a lamb dish in Moroccan spices. I braise lamb shanks in cumin, saffron, and preserved lemon, with the juice being turned into a sauce. The lamb shanks are then boned and put into a cake with eggplant and molded onto a plate. This is not Moroccan cooking per se, but it suggests the flavors of Morocco.

— DAVID WALTUCK, CHANTERELLE (NEW YORK CITY)

sumac
tomatoes
turmeric

**Flavor Affinities**

- Chile peppers + garlic + olive oil + salt (aka harissa)
- Cinnamon + coriander + cumin
- Eggplant + cinnamon + mint
- Green tea + dried spearmint + sugar
- Lamb + cinnamon + honey + prunes
- Oranges + cinnamon + honey
- Parsley + lemon juice + olive oil
- Phyllo dough + almonds + cinnamon + honey
- Phyllo dough + honey + sesame seeds

---

**MUSHROOMS — IN GENERAL** (See also specific mushrooms)

- **Season:** late spring—autumn
- **Weight:** light—medium
- **Volume:** quiet—moderate
- **Techniques:** bake, broil, deep-fry, grill, pan roast, raw (e.g., in salads), roast, sauté, soup, steam, stew

- Almonds
- Asparagus
- Bacon
- Barley
- Basil
- Bay leaf
- Beans: green, lima
- Beef
- Bell peppers, esp. red
- Bread crumbs
- **Butter,** unsalted
- Capers
- Carrots
- Cayenne
celery
garlic chives
garam masala

green chives
garlic

ginger
grappa
ham

herbs
juniper berries
leeks

lemon: juice, zest

Madeira
marjoram
meats
milk
mirepoix
mustard, Dijon
nutmeg

OIL: canola, grapeseed, peanut,

vegetable

OLIVE OIL
onions: green, pearl, red, yellow

Marjoram brings up the mushroom flavor.
— JERRY TRAUNFELD, THE HERBFARM (WOODINVILLE, WASHINGTON)
Dishes
Pappardelle with Chanterelles and Thyme
— Mario Batali, Babbo (New York City)

MUSHROOMS —
CHANTERELLES
Season: spring—autumn
Weight: light—medium
Volume: quiet—moderate
Techniques: bake, sauté

bay leaf
butter, unsalted
chard
cheese, Parmesan
chives (garnish)
cream
eggs and egg dishes (e.g., omelets)
game
garlic
lentils
mussels
oil, peanut
olive oil
onions, esp. green
parsley
pasta
pepper: black, white
poultry
radicchio
salt, kosher
sauces
shallots
soups
STOCKS: BEEF, CHICKEN
sweet potatoes
thyme, fresh
vinegar, sherry
wine, dry white

Flavor Affinities
chanterelles + butter + cream + garlic + parsley
chanterelles + cream + garlic + thyme

MUSHROOMS —
CREMINI
Season: year-round
Weight: light—medium
Volume: quiet—moderate

arugula
butter
cheese: goat, Parmesan
chives
garlic
mascarpone
olive oil
parsley, flat-leaf
pepper, white
salt
shallots
stock, chicken
thyme
truffle oil

MUSHROOMS —
MATSUTAKE
Season: autumn
Weight: medium
Volume: loud
Techniques: braise, fry, grill, sauté, simmer, steam, stir-fry

butter
cabbage, savoy
chicken
cod, black
cream
custard
dashi
fish

Matsutake mushrooms have a cinnamon and pine quality to them. This is a fall mushroom and works well with savoy cabbage. I like pairing luxurious ingredients with cabbage. We will roast black cod and serve it with cabbage, cream, and the matsutake.
— JERRY TRAUNFELD, THE HERBFARM (WOODINVILLE, WASHINGTON)
Organic Carnaroli Risotto with Wild Spring Morels, Wood-Grilled Ramps, Confit of Green Garlic and Spinach, Parmigiano-Reggiano, and Umbrian Olive Oil
— Carrie Nahabedian, Naha (Chicago)

Our Local Morel Pizza with Fontina Cheese, Virginia Country Ham, and Frizzled Ramps: A Warm Salad of Grilled Asparagus and Freshwater Blue Prawns with Sherry Vinaigrette
— Patrick O’Connell, The Inn at Little Washington (Washington, Virginia)

Caraway seeds bring up the flavor in morel mushrooms.
— JERRY TRAUNFELD, THE HERBFARM (WOODINVILLE, WASHINGTON)

flintlock ferns
GARLIC: regular, spring
ham: Virginia, Serrano
herbs
lamb
leeks
lemon
Madeira
marjoram
mirepoix
oil, peanut
olive oil
onions, esp. spring
pancetta
paprika, sweet
parsley, flat-leaf
pasta
peas
PEPPER: black, white
pork
pot
potatoes, esp. new
ramps
rosemary
SALT, kosher
sauces
savory
shallots
soufflés (e.g., goat cheese)
soy sauce
stocks: chicken, mushroom, vegetable
sweetbreads
tarragon

thyme
truffles, black
vinaigrette
vinegar, sherry
wine, Champagne

Flavor Affinities
morels + asparagus + ramps
morels + garlic + lemon + olive oil + parsley

MUSHROOMS — PORCINI / CEPES / KING BOLETE
Season: late spring–early autumn
Weight: light–medium
Volume: quiet–moderate
Techniques: grill, parboil, roast, sauté, stew

almonds
arugula
bacon
brandy
bread crumbs
butter, unsalted
carrots

cheese: Fontina, Garrotxa, Parmesan
chervil
chicken, esp. roasted
chives
coffee
cream / milk
crème fraîche
eggs
fennel
fish: grilled, white
French cuisine
garlic
hazelnuts
Italian cuisine
lemon, juice
Madeira
marjoram
mascarpone
mint
mushrooms, button or cremini

OIL, PORCINI
OLIVE OIL
onions
parsley, flat-leaf
pasta

Dishes
Raw Porcini with Arugula, Parmigiano, and Aceto Manadori
— Mario Batali, Babbo (New York City)

Salad of Porcini Mushrooms, Green Apple, and Garrotxa Cheese, with Hazelnut Vinaigrette
— Traci Des Jardins, Jardinière (San Francisco)

King Bolete — or porcini, as they are also known — are pretty sweet. I like them with a carrot puree in ravioli. The sauce for the dish will be the braising liquid from the ravioli as well as some carrot juice. The ravioli is then topped with fried sage and black currants.
— JERRY TRAUNFELD, THE HERBFARM (WOODINVILLE, WASHINGTON)
pepper, black
polenta
potatoes
prosciutto
radicchio
rice, arborio
sage
sake
salt: kosher, sea
shallots
spinach
steak
stocks: chicken, mushroom, vegetable
tamari
tarragon
thyme
tomatoes
trunffles, esp. white
veal
vinegar, esp. balsamic
walnuts
wine, dry white

**Flavor Affinities**
porcini + almonds + balsamic vinegar
porcini + arugula + lemon + Parmesan cheese
porcini + balsamic vinegar + radicchio
porcini + carrots + sage
porcini + coffee + veal
porcini + lemon juice + olive oil
porcini + parsley + tomatoes
porcini + prosciutto + spinach

**MUSHROOMS — PORCIINI / CEPES / KING BOLETE (CONT.)**

**Dishes**
Grilled Portobello with Manchego Cheese, Garlic, and Thyme Oil
— Ann Cashion, Cashion’s Eat Place (Washington, DC)

Vegetarian Sushi: Sun-Dried Tomato and Portobello Roll
— Kaz Okochi, Kaz Sushi Bistro (Washington, DC)

Gonzales Portobello Mushroom “Steak,” Texas Brown Rice and Nut Cake, Coconut-Chile Sauce
— Monica Pope, T’afia (Houston)

Pasta Salad with Sun-Dried Tomato Pesto, Portobello Mushrooms, and Grilled Squash
— Charlie Trotter, Trotter’s to Go (Chicago)

Portobello Mushrooms in Porcini Cream Curry
— Vikram Vij and Meeru Dhalwala, Vij’s (Vancouver)

Portobello Mushroom and Red Bell Pepper Curry on Paneer with Beet-Daikon Salad
— Vikram Vij and Meeru Dhalwala, Vij’s (Vancouver)

**MUSHROOMS — PORTOBELLO**

**Season:** year-round
**Weight:** medium-heavy
**Volume:** moderate
**Techniques:** broil, grill, roast, sauté, stuff
**Tips:** Gets firmer with longer cooking.

cheese: manchego, Parmesan, ricotta
crème fraîche
garlic
lemon
mint
olive oil
pasta
polenta
spinach
thyme
tomatoes, sun-dried

**Flavor Affinities**
portobello mushrooms + lemon + mint + olive oil
portobello mushrooms + polenta + spinach

**MUSHROOMS — SHIITAKE**

**Weight:** medium
**Volume:** moderate
**Techniques:** grill, sauté, simmer, stir-fry

anchovies
asparagus
bacon
basil
bell peppers, roasted
brandy
butter: clarified, unsalted
cabbage, savoy
celery root
chicken
chile peppers
chives
cod
coriander
cream
cream cheese
eggplant
eggs, esp. hard-boiled
fish sauce
GARLIC
Japanese cuisine
leeks
lemon, juice
lemongrass
lime
mushrooms, oyster
OIL: canola, hazelnut, vegetable
olive oil
ONIONS, esp. red, white
parsley, flat-leaf
Vitaly Paley of Paley’s Place in Portland, Oregon, on Cooking with Mushrooms

Mushrooms Year-Round

Spring. This is the start of the morel season. One of the reasons I came to work in Oregon was one day I was working in a kitchen in France and a box of morels arrived with a tag on it that said “Oregon.”

Summer. The morels dwindle away, and we get a brief stint of porcini/cepes. Late summer is golden and white chanterelle season.

Fall. The porcini come back and we also get in matsutake mushrooms as well. We have (Pacific Northwest) black and white truffles here and the season starts in November. They are pretty flavorful but it is important to realize they are different from European truffles — not to mention a lot less expensive.

I’m not a big fan of cultivated mushrooms but I do like a few. King oyster or trumpet royal are the same mushroom and it is one of my favorites. Portobellos are also good, though they are a little ’70s.

I am suspicious of some dried mushrooms you find in the supermarket only because you don’t know how old they are and how much flavor they will have.

Buying and Cleaning Mushrooms

When it comes to mushrooms, every kind needs to be well cleaned because there is nothing worse than getting a mouthful of grit. I wash them all by soaking them in a bowl of water and pulling them out. The key to remember is that you want to use mushrooms soon after washing them. Don’t wash them a day ahead.

For morel mushrooms, you need to know how to cook them, and slicing them up fresh and throwing them in a pan is not it. It is very important to clean them and I recommend blanching them. Fill a pot with cold water, toss in a handful of salt and then the mushrooms. Bring the pot to a boil, scoop out the mushrooms, spread them out, and lightly squeeze them dry. As you dry them, take a good look at them to make sure they are free of twigs and such.

Seasoning Mushrooms

When it comes to seasoning mushrooms, savory works across the board. The seasoning combination that I’ve used in my kitchen from day one is a raw parsley and garlic combination that in French is called persillade. After the mushrooms have been sautéed in butter or olive oil, at the last second you toss in this combination with a pinch of salt. That is all a mushroom needs most of the time!

If you are roasting porcini or king oyster mushrooms, roast them on a bed of savory or thyme for extra flavor.

Flavor Affinities

shiitake mushrooms + basil + onions

MUSSELS

Season: autumn–winter
Weight: light
Volume: quiet–moderate
Techniques: bake, boil, grill, steam

bacon
basil
bass
bay leaf
beans: green, navy
bell peppers, esp. red and/or roasted
bread crumbs
butter, unsalted
capers
carrots
cayenne
celery
celery seeds
chanterelles
chervil
chile peppers, esp. jalapeno
Chinese cuisine
chives
cilantro
CLAMS and clam juice
cod
cognac
CREAM
curry powder
egg yolks
fennel
fennel seeds
French cuisine
GARLIC
ginger
ham
Italian cuisine
leeks
LEMON, juice
lemon thyme
lovage

pepper, black
pizza
polenta
pork
potatoes
rice, basmati
rosemary
sage
salt, kosher
shallots
soups
sorrel
soy sauce
spinach
stews
stock, chicken
tarragon
thyme
vinegar, balsamic
walnuts
wine, dry white

Flavor Matchmaking: The Charts 229
Dishes
Mussel Soup with Cilantro and Serrano Chile Cream
— Robert Del Grande, Café Annie (Houston)
Mussels in a Spicy Sauce of Panca Peppers, Garlic, Cilantro, and Peruvian Dark Beer
— Maricel Presilla, Cucharamama (Hoboken, New Jersey)
Our Version of the Classic Portuguese Surf and Turf Braise: Pork Belly, Mussels, Potatoes, and Black Olives in a Savory Aji Panca and Dark Beer Sauce
— Maricel Presilla, Cucharamama (Hoboken, New Jersey)
Spaghetti with Mussels, Pine Nuts, Nutmeg, and Parsley
— Barton Seaver, Hook (Washington, DC)
Steamed Black Mussels, Coconut Broth, Red Curry Oil
— Rick Tramonto, Tru (Chicago)

MUSTARD
Taste: bitter
Function: heating
Weight: medium–heavy
Volume: moderate–very loud
Tips: Add at the end of the cooking process. Use cucumbers to cut the taste of mustard.

apples: fruit, juice
avocados
bay leaf
beef, esp. corned, grilled, or roasted
beets
cabbage
capers
cheeses (e.g., blue, cheddar, Gruyère, and other hard) and cheese dishes (e.g., macaroni and cheese, soufflé)
chicken
chile peppers
cold cuts
coriander
crab
cream and sour cream
cucumbers
cumin
cured meats
curries
curry leaves

Flavor Affinities
mussels + clams + garlic + onion + thyme + white wine
mussels + cream + curry + saffron
mussels + fennel + saffron + white wine
mussels + garlic + saffron + tomatoes
mussels + Dijon mustard + saffron
mussels + mustard + tarragon
mussels + olives + oranges
mussels + saffron + tarragon + tomatoes

marjoram
mayonnaise, garlic
Mediterranean cuisine
mint
monkfish
mushrooms
mustard, Dijon
nutmeg
OLIVE OIL
olives, black
ONIONS, esp. red, spring, white
orange: juice, zest
oregano
oysters
paella (key ingredient)
paprika: smoked, sweet
Parmesan cheese
PARSLEY: flat-leaf, curly
pasta
PEPPER: black, white
Pernod
pesto
pine nuts
potatoes
radicchio
red pepper flakes
rice and risotto
rosemary
SAFFRON
SALT: kosher, sea
scallions
SHALLOTS
shrimp
snapper
sole
squid
stews
stocks: chicken, clam, fish
tarragon
THYME
TOMATOES
vermouth
vinaigrette
vinegar: red wine, sherry
watercress
wild rice
WINE: dry white (e.g., Chardonnay, Pinot Blanc, Riesling, Sauvignon Blanc)
zucchini

Flavor Affinities
mussels + clams + garlic + onion + thyme + white wine
mussels + cream + curry + saffron
mussels + fennel + saffron + white wine
mussels + garlic + saffron + tomatoes
mussels + Dijon mustard + saffron
mussels + mustard + tarragon
mussels + olives + oranges
mussels + saffron + tarragon + tomatoes

marjoram
mayonnaise, garlic
Mediterranean cuisine
mint
monkfish
mushrooms
mustard, Dijon
nutmeg
OLIVE OIL
olives, black
ONIONS, esp. red, spring, white
orange: juice, zest
oregano
oysters
paella (key ingredient)
paprika: smoked, sweet
Parmesan cheese
PARSLEY: flat-leaf, curly
pasta
PEPPER: black, white
Pernod
pesto
pine nuts
potatoes
radicchio
red pepper flakes
rice and risotto
rosemary
SAFFRON
SALT: kosher, sea
scallions
SHALLOTS
shrimp
snapper
sole
squid
stews
stocks: chicken, clam, fish
tarragon
THYME
TOMATOES
vermouth
vinaigrette
vinegar: red wine, sherry
watercress
wild rice
WINE: dry white (e.g., Chardonnay, Pinot Blanc, Riesling, Sauvignon Blanc)
zucchini

Flavor Affinities
mussels + clams + garlic + onion + thyme + white wine
mussels + cream + curry + saffron
mussels + fennel + saffron + white wine
mussels + garlic + saffron + tomatoes
mussels + Dijon mustard + saffron
mussels + mustard + tarragon
mussels + olives + oranges
mussels + saffron + tarragon + tomatoes
dill
egg dishes
fennel
fenugreek
fish
French cuisine, esp. southern
fruits
garlic
German cuisine
gingerbread
green beans
ham
herbs
honey
Indian cuisine, as mustard seeds
Irish cuisine
Italian cuisine, esp. southern
lamb
leeks
lemon, juice
mayonnaise
meats, cold or hot
Mediterranean cuisine
mint, esp. peppermint
mostarda (mustard fruits)
mussels
oil, canola
olive oil
onions
oregano
paprika
parsley
pastrami
pepper: black, green, white
pork
potatoes
poultry
rabbit
salads and salad dressings
salmon
salt: kosher
sauces
sauerkraut
sausages
Scandinavian cuisine
seafood
smoked fish
soy sauce

Good cooking transcends all cultures. You can take inspiration from all around the world and apply it to what you are cooking without making it “fusion.” In some cases, you can even take a classic and make it taste better. I worked with Floyd Cardoz [chef of the Indian restaurant Tabla in New York City] and learned a lot about Indian spicing and technique from him. One technique was turka, which is where you fry spices in oil or ghee [Indian clarified butter] until they pop. It really opens up the flavor of the spices.

I use this cross-cultural technique when making a veal dish with a great mustard sauce, which is a classic French dish, and the result is not a fusion dish: Take black, yellow, and red mustard seeds and toast them in butter or olive oil until they pop; then add some shallots and vermouth and reduce it. Then, add veal stock with a splash of cream and Dijon mustard. The result is a very complex sauce with a much deeper flavor, versus simply combining some cream and mustard together in the pan.

— ANDREW CARMELLIINI, A VOCE (NEW YORK CITY)

steaks
sumac
tarragon
tomatoes
turmeric
vegetable-based dishes
vinaigrettes
vinegar: balsamic, red wine, white
wine
walnuts: nuts, oil

Flavor Affinities

mustard + curry leaves + cumin
mustard + garlic + oil + shallots + vinegar
mustard + garlic + oil + vinegar
mustard + oil + shallots + vinegar

MUSTARD GREENS

(See Greens, Mustard)

Tarragon leads me to mustard which leads me to shellfish — which leads me to mussels. The combination of the three is delicious.

— MICHAEL ANTHONY, GRAMERCY TAVERN (NEW YORK CITY)
NECTARINES
(See also Peaches)
Season: late spring–early autumn
Taste: sweet
Weight: light–medium
Volume: moderate
Techniques: bake, broil, grill, poach, raw, sauté

allspice
almonds, esp. toasted
apricots
beverages, esp. cocktails
blackberries
blueberries
brandy
butter, unsalted
buttermilk
caramel
Champagne
cherries
chicken
chocolate
cinnamon
cranberries
cream and ice cream
custard
desserts and dessert sauces
figs
ginger, esp. fresh
hazelnuts
honey
Kirsch
lemon: juice, zest
maple syrup
mascarpone
milk, sweetened condensed
mint (garnish)
nutmeg

oatmeal
onions
orange, juice
orange liqueur
peaches
peach liqueur (e.g., schnapps)
pecans
pepper, black
pistachios
plums (compatible fruit)
pork
raspberries
salads, fruit
salsas, fruit
soups, esp. chilled
sour cream
strawberries
SUGAR: brown, white
vanilla
vinegar, cider
WINE: red, fruity, sweet, or white:
  Merlot, Moscato d'Asti, Muscat,
  Rosé, Sauternes, Vin Santo,
  Zinfandel
yogurt

NUTMEG
Season: autumn–winter
Taste: sweet
Botanical relative: mace
Weight: light–medium
Volume: loud
Tips: Use in moderation.

allspice
apples
baked dishes (e.g., biscuits, cakes,
  pies)
beef: braised, raw
berries
beverages (e.g., chocolate,
  eggnog)
broccoli
butter
cabbage
cakes
cardamom
Caribbean cuisine
carrots
cauliflower
CHEESE (ESP. RICOTTA)
  AND CHEESE DISHES
chicken
chickpeas
Chinese cuisine
chocolate
chowders (e.g., fish)
cinnamon
cloves
cookies
coriander
CREAM / MILK
  cumin
  custards
  DESSERTS

Dishes
Roasted Nectarine Custard Cake with Ice Wine Sorbet and Warm Berry Compote
  — Dominique and Cindy Duby, Wild Sweets (Vancouver)

New Orleans Nectar Soda “Snow Cone” with Stewed Nectarines and
Fresh Raspberries — and Drizzle of Sweetened Condensed Milk
  — Bob Lacovone, Cuveé (New Orleans)
I love **nuts**, and put them in everything. I find that almost all nuts pair well with a lot of different things. When I am creating a dessert, I will choose my nuts geographically. For example, if I am making a Sicilian dessert, I'll use pistachios because that is the nut they would use [in Sicily].

— **GINA DEPALMA**, **BABBO** (NEW YORK CITY)
The quality of chopped nuts can never compare with the quality of whole nuts. In 26 years, we have never bought chopped pecans because the quality is so different, despite the fact that it would be a lot less expensive.

I recommend simply chopping by hand or, in the case of something like a pecan, breaking it with your fingers. Pecans have so much moisture that if you chop them, you lose what is special about their texture. People tend to put nuts into the food processor and the next thing you know, you have powder and not pieces.

We always toast our nuts, 100 percent of the time. Nuts absorb a lot of moisture, so by toasting them you dry them out and heighten the flavor. You do need to be careful, because they burn so easily. Slower roasting is better. With a nut like a cashew, you want to roast them at 325 degrees to get them to be a nice, golden brown.

— MARCEL DESAULNIERS, THE TRELLIS (WILLIAMSBURG, VIRGINIA)

Always toast nuts to bring up the flavor. If you don’t toast the nuts before adding them to a dish, they tend to come out soggy when the dish is done. The one exception would be if they are going on top of a tart going into the oven, because then they would be overtoasted.

Nuts work great in adding texture, especially to creamy and/or moussey desserts. The other way to balance out richness is with some phyllo dough.

— EMILY LUCHETTI, FARALLON (SAN FRANCISCO)

Juicing nuts is the new thing we are doing. We’ll juice almonds, hazelnuts, and — best of all — pine nuts, which comes out like pine nut butter. Juicing pine nuts is better than grinding them, because it pulverizes their fat. We put that on some local green beans with preserved lemon zest, to serve with spring onions with lamb.

— ANDREW CARMELLINI, A VOCE (NEW YORK CITY)

Lavender works well with all sorts of nuts, including almonds, hazelnuts, pistachios, and walnuts. The one nut it doesn’t work well with is chestnuts.

— JERRY TRAUNFELD, THE HERBFARM (WOODINVILLE, WASHINGTON)
Dishes
Cherry-Almond Granola with Greek Yogurt and Vanilla Honey
— Daniel Humm, Eleven Madison Park (New York City)

Steel-Cut Oats, Devon Cream, Cinnamon Toast, and Cider-Roasted Apples
— Daniel Humm, Eleven Madison Park (New York City)

Grown-Up Oatmeal Soufflé Served with Maple Syrup and Rum-Soaked Currants
— Patrick O’Connell, The Inn at Little Washington (Washington, Virginia)

Flavor Affinities
— rhubarb
— rum, dark
— salt (pinch)
— strawberries
— SUGAR: brown, white
— sweet potatoes
— vanilla
— walnuts
— yogurt

Flavor Affinities
— oatmeal + currants + maple syrup
— oatmeal + pears + vanilla + yogurt

OCTOPUS
— Weight: medium
— Volume: quiet—moderate
— Techniques: grill, simmer, stew

— chile peppers, jalapeño
— chives
— chorizo
— dashi
— garlic
— ginger
— lemon, juice
— mint
— olive oil
— onions, red
— orange, juice
— pepper, black
— potatoes
— red pepper flakes
— sake
— salt, sea
— soy sauce
— tamarind
— tangerine
— tomatoes and tomato sauce

Flavor Affinities
— octopus + chorizo + lemon
— octopus + jalapeño peppers + mint
— octopus + orange + potatoes
— octopus + sake + sea salt

OIL, AVOCADO
— Weight: light
— Volume: quiet
— Techniques: emulsify, fry, grill, raw, roast, salads, sauté, stir-fry

— arugula
— asparagus
— avocados
— basil
— chile peppers
— corn
— cucumber
— emulsions
— fish
— garlic
— grapefruit
— guinea fowl
— lemon, juice
— lime, juice
— melon
— orange, juice
— pasta
— rabbit
— salads and salad dressings
— salmon
— scallops

I like almond oil with asparagus salad.
— DANIEL HUMM, ELEVEN MADISON PARK (NEW YORK CITY)

I’ll poach everything from saddle of rabbit to guinea fowl to fish — from sturgeon, which holds up nicely, to New Zealand snapper to John Dory — in avocado oil. It gives an incredible texture and depth of flavor. I also like it with vegetarian dishes. I use it in dressings, and it seems to hold an emulsion really well. It has a nice affinity with tomato; I have made tomato water with chardonnay vinegar and avocado oil, and it makes beautiful light dressing. It also goes well with citrus like lemon, lime, or orange. Just like you like to squeeze some citrus over avocado, avocado oil works the same way in reverse.
— BRAD FARMERIE, PUBLIC (NEW YORK CITY)
seafood
shrimp
squid
thyme
tomatoes and tomato water
tuna
vegetables
vegetarian dishes
vinegar: balsamic, chardonnay, white wine
zucchini

**Flavor Affinities**

avocado oil + chardonnay vinegar
+ tomato water

---

**OIL, CANOLA**

Taste: neutral
Weight: light
Volume: quiet
Techniques: bake, sauté

salads and salad dressings

AVOID
deep-fry

---

**OIL, GRAPESEED**

Taste: neutral
Weight: light
Volume: quiet
Techniques: fry, raw, sauté

coconut
marinades
salads and salad dressings
sauteed dishes
vinaigrettes

---

**OIL, HAZELNUT**

Weight: medium-heavy
Volume: moderate-loud
Techniques: raw
Tips: Avoid cooking, as it burns easily.

apples
artichokes
broccoli

Hazelnut oil gets mixed with cider vinegar; that is a great natural marriage. This gets tossed in our baby winter spinach with mixed herbs and frisée salad. The toasted nut quality mixes well with bitter greens.

— MICHAEL ANTHONY, GRAMERCY TAVERN (NEW YORK CITY)

Hazelnut oil is a wonderful autumn oil. We will use it in a dark balsamic vinaigrette served with squab. It is also very good with broccoli. If you make a broccoli soup, use this along with toasted hazelnuts. It is a delicious combination.

— DANIEL HUMM, ELEVEN MADISON PARK (NEW YORK CITY)

---

**OIL, MACADAMIA NUT**

Weight: light-medium
Volume: moderate-loud
Techniques: bake, roast

fruit salads, esp. with tropical fruits
Hawaiian cuisine
macadamia nuts
rice salads
sauces

---

**OIL, OLIVE (See Olive Oil)**

---

**OIL, PEANUT**

Weight: light
Volume: quiet-moderate
Techniques: fry, raw, salads, stir-fry

---

Asian cuisines
Chinese cuisine
cooking
fruits and fruit salads
garlic
ginger
lentils
meats
peanuts
salad dressings, esp. Asian, fruit soy sauce
vinegars, esp. balsamic, malt

---

**OIL, PISTACHIO**

Weight: medium
Volume: moderate
Techniques: bake

asparagus
avocado
beets
bread
fish
mayonnaise
meat
OIL, SESAME
Function: heating
Weight: light–medium
Volume: moderate–loud (light to dark versions)
Techniques: raw
Tips: Add as a flavoring to raw or cooked dishes.

Asian cuisine
beef
cabbage, napa
chicken
chili powder
Chinese cuisine
fish
fruit salads
garlic
ginger
greens, esp. Asian
honey
Japanese cuisine
Korean cuisine
lemon, juice
lemongrass
lime, juice
marinades
meats
miso soup
mustard
noodles
oil, vegetable (compatible oil)
orange
pepper, black
salads and salad dressings, esp.
Asian

OIL, TRUFFLE
Weight: light
Volume: moderate–loud
Techniques: raw

cheese
eggs
fish
mushrooms
pasta
risotto
salads and salad dressings

Dishes
Endive and Mushroom Salad, Blue Cheese, Spicy Pecans, White Balsamic–White Truffle Vinaigrette
— Monica Pope, T'afia (Houston)

OIL, WALNUT
Weight: medium
Volume: moderate
Techniques: raw
Tips: Avoid cooking as it burns easily.

Truffle oil is one of those ingredients that really gets overused, so one day I decided that I wanted to do truffle oil right. We make a dressing of truffle oil, white balsamic vinegar, and whole grain mustard. We toss it over endive, crumbled blue cheese, spicy pecans, and raw cremini mushrooms. You just can’t stop eating it!
— MONICA POPE, T’AFIA (HOUSTON)

Pistachio oil beautifully complements tuna and asparagus in our dish
Big Eye Tuna Thinly Sliced with Provence White Asparagus and
Monteottoer Pistachio Oil.
— DANIEL HUMM, ELEVEN MADISON PARK (NEW YORK CITY)

Pasta
salads and salad dressings
tuna

OIL, PORCINI
Weight: medium
Volume: moderate
Techniques: raw

bread
cheese
mushrooms, esp. porcini
pasta
risotto
salads and salad dressings
sauces
stews

OIL, PUMPKIN SEED
Weight: light
Volume: quiet
Tips: Use to finish a dish, not to cook.

beef, rare
citrus
corn
desserts
ice cream
maple syrup
mustard, Dijon
pastry
pumpkin seeds
rice
soups
squash, winter

[ Pumpkin seed oil] is good for finishing dishes with just a little drizzle. We have even poured it over ice cream that is served with a pumpkin seed brittle.
— BRAD FARMERIE, PUBLIC (NEW YORK CITY)
On Selecting the Right Oil

Your choice of olive oil always depends on what you are using it for. In general, you don't want an oil that is super-assertive, green, or peppery. You want a good olive flavor. I use a 100 percent Italian blend. It is silly to cook with 100 percent extra-virgin olive oil if you are just sautéing something. If the oil is going to stay in what you are making, like a sauce, then start with extra-virgin olive oil. When I make a tomato sauce, that is what I am starting with.

If you are finishing a dish, that is also when you would use an assertive, more full-flavored oil. I also like to use nut oils, especially those made by Jean Leblanc. They are insane; his oils are so good that after you taste them, nothing else will do! I especially like to use nut oils in the fall. I use walnut oil dressing on salads, especially those salads that accompany meat. If you make a foie gras dish with apples and endive, an addition of walnut oil would be great.

— Andrew Carmellini, A Voce (New York City)

Olive oil comes in a wide variety of flavors and strengths even from the same region, much like wine:

- I use a heavier (e.g., Puglian, Umbrian, Sicilian) olive oil on bigger-flavored dishes. A strong olive oil goes well on bean puree or a strong vegetable like dandelion greens. In the United States, you would put a barbecue sauce on a grilled meat; in Italy, you would use a strong olive oil.

- I use a lighter (e.g., Ligurian, Tuscan) olive oil on lighter meats like veal or fish dishes and pastas. A Ligurian olive is full and bright and is great on a lighter dish.

— Odette Fada, San Domenico (New York City)

- I like to use single varietal olive oil from Australia and New Zealand. Australian olive oils can be like their wines: big, pungent, and spicy. New Zealand oils have a little more depth of flavor and green grassiness.

— Brad Farmerie, Public (New York City)
I like Greek black olives(70,1011),(805,1038) the best. I like them by themselves, but they also work great in a chicken, duck, or lamb dish.

— GABRIEL KREUTHER, THE MODERN (NEW YORK CITY)

Olives have such a strong flavor that they can overwhelm other ingredients, but salmon will stand right up to it.

— MICHEL RICHARD, CITRONELLE (WASHINGTON, DC)

beans, white chickpeas fish French cuisine, southern garlic herbs hummus Italian cuisine meats Mediterranean cuisine Middle Eastern cuisine Moroccan cuisine olives Parmesan cheese pasta pepper, black salads and salad dressings salt soups Spanish cuisine thyme vegetables vinegar

OLIVES
Taste: salty
Weight: light–medium
Volume: quiet–loud (depending on type)

almonds anchovies basil bass bay leaf bell peppers, esp. red brandy bread butter capers cayenne cheese: feta, goat’s milk chicken cognac cream cheese cumin fish French cuisine, esp. Provencal GARLIC Italian cuisine lamb LEMON: juice, zest meats Mediterranean cuisines Moroccan cuisine olive oil onions, esp. red orange: juice, zest oregano parsley, flat-leaf pasta pepper: black, white peppers, piquillo Pernod pine nuts red pepper flakes rosemary sage salads and salad dressings salmon salt: kosher, sea sambuca scallions scallops shallots Spanish cuisine thyme tomatoes: regular, sun-dried tuna veal vinegar: red wine, sherry wine, dry white

OMELETS (See Eggs and Egg-based Dishes)

ONIONS — IN GENERAL
Season: year-round
Taste: pungent (+ sweet with cooking via caramelization)
Botanical relatives: chives, garlic, leeks, shallots
Function: heating
Weight: light–medium
Volume: moderate–loud
Techniques: bake, boil, braise, deep-fry, fry, grill, roast, sauté, stir-fry
Tips: Onions increase appetite, and go with virtually all savory foods.

anchovies apples bacon basil bay leaf beans beef, ground, e.g., hamburgers, meat loaf beer beets bell peppers brandy bread: croutons, crumbs BUTTER, UNSALTED caraway seeds cardamom carrots cayenne cheese: cheddar, Comté, Emmental, fromage blanc, goat, Gruyère, Parmesan, Swiss

Dishes
Olive and Anchovy Tapenade with Sage Crackers
— Monica Pope, T’afia (Houston)
The onion family is the basis for every cuisine I can think of. Of course, Asian cuisines use more green onions and garlic, while the French use more shallots and garlic, but it's the onion family providing the foundation.

— TONY LIU, AUGUST (NEW YORK CITY)

You can't cook without onions. There is not a single thing you can do without onions. There are so many things made with onions that when people come in to our restaurant and say that they are allergic to onions, I say, "No, you are not — it is impossible. You just don't like onions." People eat onions all the time and just don't know it. I remember having a conversation with [the artist] Jasper Johns, with him saying, "If truffles and onions cost the same amount of money, you would obviously choose an onion. You don't need truffles; you do need onions."

— DAVID WALTUCK, CHANTERELLE (NEW YORK CITY)

I roast onions a long, long time and use them to add a meaty flavor to soups.

— MICHEL RICHARD, CITRONELLE (WASHINGTON, DC)

Your cooking technique alters your flavors a great deal. If you put a lot of onions in your curry but don't sauté them enough first, you will get a sweet flavor. If you sauté the onions until they are almost burnt but not quite, your curry will have more of a roasted-toasted flavor.

— VIKRAM VIJ, VIJ'S (VANCOUVER)

chile peppers, esp. jalapeño
cilantro
cinnamon
cloves
coriander
cream / milk
créme fraîche
cucumbers
cumin seeds
curry
dill
dips
eggs, e.g., omelets
garlic
greens, bitter
hamburgers
honey
lemon, juice
lime, juice
liver
mace
mangoes, esp. with red onions
marjoram
meats
milk
mint (e.g., Indian)
mirepoix (key ingredient)
mushrooms
mustard, Dijon

NUTMEG
OIL: canola, peanut, sesame, vegetable
olive oil
olives, black
orange, juice
oregano
paprika
Parmesan cheese
parsley, flat-leaf
peas
pepper: black, white
ponzu sauce
pork
potatoes
poultry
raisins, esp. golden
rice
rosemary
saffron
sage
salads
SALT: fleur de sel, kosher, sea
sandwiches
sauces and gravies
savory
soups
sour cream
stews
stocks: beef, chicken, veal
sugar (pinch)
Tabasco sauce
THYME, lemon
tomatoes
vegetables
vinegar: balsamic, champagne,
red wine, sherry, white wine
wine: dry red, white, port

Flavor Affinities
onions + balsamic vinegar +
brown sugar
onions + beer + cheese + nutmeg
onions + garlic + thyme

Dishes
Roasted Vidalia Onion Stuffed with Walnuts, Wild Rice, and Roquefort Served with
Wilted Arugula, Fava Beans, and Vegetable Demi-Glace
— Peter Nowakoski, Rat's (Hamilton, New Jersey)
ONIONS, SWEET
(e.g., Vidalia)
Season: late spring–early summer
Taste: sweet
Weight: light–medium
Volume: quiet–moderate

basil
cayenne
chard
cheese: blue (e.g., Cabrales, Maytag), goat, Parmesan
chives
cilantro
ginger, fresh
herbs
lettuces
mint
nutmeg
olive oil
pine nuts
salads
salt
sandwiches
Tabasco sauce
tomatoes
vinegar: rice, sherry
yogurt

Flavor Affinities
Vidalia onions + goat cheese + tomatoes + sherry vinegar

ORANGES — IN GENERAL
Season: year-round
Taste: sour, sweet
Function: heating
Weight: medium
Volume: moderate–loud
Techniques: poach, raw
Tips: Lemon brightens the flavor of orange.

almonds
anise seeds

Dishes
Baked Chocolate Mousse with Mandarin Oranges and Anise Seed Croustillant
— Dominique and Cindy Duby, Wild Sweets (Vancouver)
Orange and Basil Soup, Alpine Strawberry Compote, and Mascarpone Mousse
— Dominique and Cindy Duby, Wild Sweets (Vancouver)
Candied Orange Sponge with Poached Rhubarb and Cream Cheese Mousse
— François Payard, Payard Patisserie and Bistro (New York City)
Orange Tart with Carrot Cake and Mandarin
— François Payard, Payard Patisserie and Bistro (New York City)
I like orange zest with crab and shrimp because it gives them a sunny flavor. Lemon and lime are too strong. Orange is feminine — the lady of citrus — while lemon and lime are the men!
— MICHEL RICHARD, CITRONELLE (WASHINGTON, DC)

I use liqueurs such as [orange-flavored] Grand Marnier to bring out the flavors of other ingredients. When it’s done right, you don’t even know it is there.
— EMILY LUCHETTI, FARALLON (SAN FRANCISCO)

Orange and pomegranate season overlap in the fall, making these two fruits a natural pairing.
— JOSÉ ANDRÉS, CAFÉ ATLÁNTICO (WASHINGTON, DC)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Example</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>apples</td>
<td>custard</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>apricots</td>
<td>dates</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Armagnac</td>
<td>desserts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>arugula</td>
<td>fennel</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>avocados</td>
<td>figs: dried, fresh</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bananas</td>
<td>fish</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>basil</td>
<td>game</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>beets</td>
<td>garlic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>blackberries</td>
<td>ginger</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>blueberries</td>
<td>grapefruit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>brandy</td>
<td>greens</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>buttermilk</td>
<td>grenadine syrup</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>carrot</td>
<td>guava</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cardamom</td>
<td>hazelnuts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>carrots</td>
<td>honey</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ceviche</td>
<td>ices</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>chile peppers, esp. serrano</td>
<td>juniper berries</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>chives</td>
<td>Italian cuisine</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cheese: goat, ricotta</td>
<td>Kirsch</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cherries</td>
<td>kumquats</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>chestnuts</td>
<td>LEMON: juice, zest</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>chicken</td>
<td>lemongrass</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>chile peppers, esp. serrano</td>
<td>lettuce, romaine</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>chives</td>
<td>lime</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CHOCOLATE: dark, white</td>
<td>lime leaf, kaffir</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cilantro</td>
<td>liqueurs, almond</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cinnamon</td>
<td>macadamia nuts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cloves</td>
<td>mangoes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>coconut</td>
<td>maple syrup</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>coffee</td>
<td>mascarpone</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cognac</td>
<td>meats</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>crabs</td>
<td>melon</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cranberries</td>
<td>meringue</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cream and ice cream</td>
<td>MINT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>crust: pastry, pie</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cumin</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>nectarines</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>oats</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>olive oil</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>olives, black</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ORANGES, esp. green, red</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>orange, zest</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>orange liqueurs: Cointreau,</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grand Marnier</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>papaya</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>paprika</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>parsley, flat-leaf</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>passion fruit</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>peaches</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>pears</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>pecans</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>pepper, black</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>persimmons</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>pineapple</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>pine nuts</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>pistachios</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>plums</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>pomegranates</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>poppy seeds</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>pork, roast</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>port</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>prunes</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>pumpkin</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>quince</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>raisins</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>raspberries</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>rhubarb</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>rice</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>rosemary</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>rum</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>saffron</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>salads, fruit and green</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>salt</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sauces</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>scallops</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>shrimp</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>squash, winter (e.g., butternut)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>star anise</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>strawberries</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SUGAR: brown, white</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sweet potatoes</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tea</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>thyme</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tomatoes</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Flavor Matchmaking: The Charts
vanilla
veal
vinegar, esp. rice wine, sherry
walnuts
watercress
wine: red, sweet, white
yogurt

**Flavor Affinities**
orange + anise + chocolate
orange + anise + dried figs + walnuts
orange + basil + sugar
orange + chocolate + pistachios
orange + cinnamon + honey + saffron
orange + seafood + tarragon

**ORANGES, BLOOD**

*Season:* winter–late spring
*Taste:* sour–sweet
*Weight:* medium
*Volume:* moderate

caramel
Champagne
chocolate, white
cinnamon
cloves
cream
grapefruit
honey
kumquats
lemon
mint
pomegranates
salads
sugar, brown
tarts
vanilla

**ORANGES, CLEMENTINE**

*(See Oranges, Mandarin)*

**Dishes**

*Blood Orange–Vanilla Cremesicle*
— Emily Luchetti, pastry chef, Farallon
(San Francisco)

**Dishes**

Chocolate and Tangerine Semifreddo Garnished with Chopped Pistachios
— Gina DePalma, pastry chef, Babbo (New York City)

**ORANGES, MANDARIN**

*(Includes Clementines and Tangerines)*

*Season:* autumn–spring
*Taste:* sweet, sour
*Weight:* light–medium
*Volume:* moderate

almonds
apricots
bananas
Campari
caramel
chicken
Chinese cuisine (e.g., as dessert)
chives
chocolate, esp. dark
cream and ice cream
crème anglaise
cumin
custard
dates
desserts
duck
fish
garlic
ginger
grapefruit
hazelnuts and hazelnut oil
honey
kumquats
lavender
LEMON JUICE
lemongrass
lemon verbena
lettuces
lime
lime leaf, kaffir
liqueurs, orange

**OREGANO**

*Season:* late autumn–late spring
*Botanical relative:* marjoram (milder in flavor than oregano)
*Weight:* medium–heavy
*Volume:* moderate–loud
*Tips:* Oregano can have great variability, i.e., from mild to hot and spicy (e.g., Italian oregano is “quieter” than Greek oregano).

mascarpone
melon
mint
olive oil
onions, green
oranges and blood oranges
passion fruit
pistachios
pomegranates
raspberries
rosemary
rum, esp. dark
salads
salt
scallops
seafood
sesame oil
shellfish (e.g., crab)
shrimp
sugar
vinegar: champagne, rice, white
wine
yogurt

Avoid oregano with desserts. Oregano firmly belongs in savory cuisine; one taste, and it immediately calls to mind pizza sauce!

— GINA DEPALMA, BABBO (NEW YORK CITY)
beans, esp. dried and/or white
beef
BELL PEPPERS
broccoli
broths
capers
cheese and cheese dishes: feta, mozzarella, Parmesan
chicken
chile peppers, esp. piquillo
chili con carne, esp. Mexican
oregano
chili powder
chives
cucumbers
cumin
duck
eggs and egg dishes
eggplant
FISH, esp. oilier, and esp. baked
or grilled
garlic
Greek cuisine
greens, bitter
grilled dishes
hamburgers
Italian cuisine
lamb
*LEMON
marjoram
MEATS, esp. red and/or grilled,
and meat-based dishes
Mediterranean cuisine
Mexican cuisine
mint (say some)
mole sauces, esp. with Mexican
oregano
mushrooms
olive oil
olives
onions
paprika
parsley
PASTA AND PASTA SAUCES
pepper, black
PIZZA
pork
potatoes
poultry
quail
rabbit
roasts
rosemary
sage
salads and salad dressings, esp.
Greek
sauces
sausages
seafood
shellfish
shrimp
soups, esp. chicken, fish,
vegetable
Spanish cuisine
squash, summer
squid
stews
stuffing
swordfish
Tex-Mex cuisine
thyme
*TOMATOES AND TOMATO
SAUCES
veal
vegetables, esp. summer
vinaigrettes
vinegar
zucchini
AVOID
cilantro
desserts
dill
mint (say some)
tarragon

Flavor Affinities
oregano + basil + tomato
oregano + lemon juice + marjoram

OXTAILS (See Beef)

OYSTERS
Season: autumn–spring (aka “months containing the letter r”)
Taste: salty
Weight: light–heavy (e.g., light Kumamotos to heavy Gulf Coast oysters)
Volume: quiet–moderate
Techniques: bake, broil, deep-fry, grill, poach, raw, roast, sauté, steam

aioli
apples
asparagus
bacon
basil
bay leaf
beer / ale
beets
bread, esp. dark
bread crumbs, panko
butter, unsalted

If you come to Chanterelle during November and December, you will see oysters with white truffles when they are both in season and they are classics for this restaurant.
— DAVID WALTUCK, CHANTERELLE (NEW YORK CITY)

Dishes
Oysters Served with Tomatillo-Habanero “Miñoneta,” Smoky Chipotle-Garlic Salsa and Fresh-Cut Limes
— Rick Bayless, Frontera Grill (Chicago)

Oysters on the Half Shell with Champagne Mignonette and Fresh Horseradish
— Traci Des Jardins, Jardinière (San Francisco)
Cajun cuisine
- capers
- caviar
- cayenne
- celery
- Champagne
- chervil
- chives
- chili sauce
- chilies
- cilantro
- clams
- cocktail sauce
- cornmeal (for crust)

CREAM
- crème fraîche
- Creole cuisine
- cucumbers
- daikon
- fennel
- flour (for dredging)
- French cuisine
- garlic
- gazpacho
- ginger
- hollandaise sauce

horseradish
- lavender

LEEKS
LEMON: juice, zest
- lemon verbena
- lime, juice
- mint
- mushrooms, wild

OIL: canola, peanut, vegetable
- olive oil
- olives
- onions, Spanish
- orange
- oyster juice
- paprika
- parsley, flat-leaf
- passion fruit

PEPPER: black, white
- pomegranate
- sauce
- potatoes
- risotto
- saffron
- sake
- salmon, smoked
- SALT: kosher, sea
- sauces: cocktail, mignonette
- scallions
- sea urchin
- seaweed

SHALLOTS
- shiso leaf
- shrimp
- sorrel
- sour cream
- Southern cuisine
- soy sauce
- spinach
- stocks: chicken, clam, fish, vegetable
- sugar (pinch)
- Tabasco sauce
- tapioca
- thyme
- tomatoes: flesh, juice
- truffles: black, white
- vermouth

VINEGAR: balsamic, champagne, red wine, rice, sherry
- WINE, dry white
- yuzu juice

AVOID
- tarragon

**Flavor Affinities**
- oysters + caviar + leeks
- oysters + caviar + tapioca
- oysters + clams + potatoes + thyme
- oysters + cream + horseradish + onions
- oysters + ginger + horseradish + sherry vinegar
- oysters + horseradish + champagne vinegar
- oysters + Muscadet + shallots + vinegar
- oysters + shallots + vinegar

**PANCAKES**
- Taste: salty
- Weight: medium
- Volume: moderate
- Techniques: fry
- arugula
- beans
- butter
- cheese: fontina, Parmesan
- garlic
- Italian cuisine
- lentils
- meats
- olive oil
- onions
- parsley
- parsnips
- PASTA
- peas
- pepper, black
- pistachios
- poultry
- SAUCES
- tomatoes
- vegetables

**PAPAYAS**
- Season: summer-autumn
- Taste: sweet
- Weight: medium
- Volume: moderate
- Techniques: bake, grill, raw, sauté
- bananas
- beverages (e.g., smoothies)
- caramel
- cashews
- carrots, esp. with green
- chile peppers: jalapeño, serrano
- chocolate, white
- cilantro
- cinnamon
- citrus fruits
- coconut: meat, milk
- cream and ice cream
- curries
fish sauce
garlic, esp. with green papayas
ginger
grapefruit
honey
kiwi fruit
kumquats
lemon, juice
LIME, juice
macadamia nuts
mango
marinades
melon
mint
nectarines
orange
passion fruit
peaches
peanuts
pepper, black
pineapple
port
prosciutto
raspberries
salads, fruit
salsa
salt, esp. with green
shrimp, esp. dried with green
  papaya
sorbet
soups
sour cream
strawberries
sugar
vanilla
vinegar: rice, white wine
yogurt

**PAPRIKA — IN GENERAL**

**Taste:** sweet–hot, depending on variety (e.g., hot, sweet, smoked, etc.)

**Weight:** light

**Volume:** quiet–loud

**Tips:** Add at the beginning of the cooking process.

allspice
barbecue

beef
bell peppers
butter, unsalted
Cajun cuisine
caraway seeds
cardamom
cauliflower
cheese
CHICKEN, esp. baked or
  paprikash
chili
crabs
cream
crème fraîche
curries
duck
eggs, esp. hard-boiled and egg
  dishes (e.g., omelets)
European cuisines
fish, esp. baked
garlic
ginger
goulash (key ingredient)
hummus
Hungarian cuisine
Indian cuisine
lamb
legumes
lemon, juice
marjoram
meats
Middle Eastern cuisine
Moroccan cuisine
mushrooms
octopus
olive oil
onions
oregano
paprikash
parsley
pepper, white
pork
potatoes
rice
rosemary
saffron
salads: pasta, potato
salt, sea
sauces, esp. cream
sausage, esp. chorizo
seafood
shellfish
soups
sour cream
Spanish cuisine
stews, esp. fish
stock, chicken
tagines
thyme
Turkish cuisine
turmeric
veal
vegetables
yogurt

**Flavor Affinities**
paprika + beef + sour cream

---

**PAPRIKA, SMOKED**

**Weight:** medium

**Volume:** moderate–loud

bacon
beans, esp. white

We use lots of smoked paprika, but need to be careful because it can be really strong. I like to finish our fried chickpeas with this because it makes them taste like they just jumped out of the fire! We also like to mix our paprikas together, typically in equal proportions of sweet, hot, and smoked. Smoked paprika is primarily smoky and doesn't have a lot of other flavors. So if you combine it with a vibrant sweet paprika, you'll get a more rounded pepper flavor. Paprika is also very regional. In the south [of Spain] where it gets sunshine and heat, you see more smoked paprika, but in the north where it is colder and rainy, they are not into the heat.

— ALEXANDRA RAU, TIA POL (NEW YORK CITY)
cheese
chicken
chickpeas
chorizo
clam
eggs, hard-boiled
fish (e.g., skate)
garlic
lamb
marjoram
mayonnaise
meats, esp. grilled or roasted
Mediterranean cuisine
octopus
olive oil
onions
paella
pepper, black
peppers, piquillo
pork, esp. ribs
potatoes
sage
scallions
seafood
soups
steaks
stews
tomatoes
turkey, esp. roasted
vegetables
vegetarian meals

Flavor Affinities
smoked paprika + mayonnaise + seafood

PARSLEY
Season: year-round
Weight: light
Volume: quiet
Tips: Use fresh. Parsley generally refers to flat-leaf parsley. Parsley is great for blending, as it is compatible with virtually all other herbs.

avocados
basil

bay leaf
beans, esp. dried
beef
bouquet garni (ingredient, along with bay leaf, marjoram, thyme)
braised dishes
bulgur wheat
butter
capers
carrots
cauliflower
cheese, esp. Parmesan, ricotta
cervil
chicken
chile peppers
chives
cinnamon
clams
cream
cream cheese
crème fraîche
dill
eggs and egg dishes
eggplant
fennel
fines herbes (ingredient)
FISH
French cuisine, esp. southern
game
GARLIC
halibut
ham
herbs (as a flavor enhancer)
Italian cuisine, esp. southern
lemon: juice, zest
lemon balm
lentils
lovage
marjoram
meats
Mediterranean cuisine
Middle Eastern cuisine
mint
Moroccan cuisine
mushrooms
mussels
oils: hazelnut, walnut

olive oil
onions
oregano
oysters
parsnips
pasta and pasta sauces
peas
pepper: black, white
pesto (ingredient)
pizza
pork
potatoes
poultry
rice
rosemary
sage
salads, esp. egg, green, pasta, potato, or rice
salsa verde (ingredient)
sauces
sauces
savory
scallions
seafood
shallots
shrimp
skate
snails
sorrel
SOUPS
Spanish cuisine, esp. southern
spinach
stews
stocks
stuffings
sumac
tabbouleh (key ingredient)
tarragon
thyme
tomatoes and tomato sauces
veal
vegetables
vinaigrette
vinegar, balsamic
zucchini

AVOID
desserts
The Spanish use parsley stems for cooking, and fresh as a garnish. When you make rice or beans, you would put a stem before serving. To me, parsley added to fish or shellfish makes the dish tastes more "marine," as opposed to earthy. I love salsa verde, which is a sauce made with basically a ton of parsley, garlic, and some kind of juice like clam juice. It's wonderful served with fish.

— ALEXANDRA RAIJ, TÍA POL (NEW YORK CITY)

People do not understand parsley; they think it is green specks. But it is wonderful with fish. If you make a straight-up linguini with clam sauce, you want a big handful of chopped parsley in there — not for the appearance, but for the taste. It is an important component in a lot of dishes and needs to be there. It can also be used as a sauce all on its own. If you sprinkle it on a steak, it will not have the impact that it would on fish. On the other hand, if you make a Maître d'hôtel butter [butter flavored with lemon juice and parsley] and put it on the steak, the parsley has a role there. On vegetables, if you make glazed carrots or pearl onions or a stew with lots of vegetables, parsley stirred in at the last moment is good stuff. As for my choice of parsley, I always use flat Italian-style parsley.

— DAVID WALTUCK, CHANTERELLE (NEW YORK CITY)

Salsa verde is my favorite all-purpose condiment at home. I like it on fish, lamb, and steak. It is made with anchovy, garlic, shallots, olive oil, and herbs — primarily parsley, but also chervil, chives, tarragon, a little bit of marjoram, and sometimes a little mint if I am in the mood. I add the acid at the last moment so it won't change the color of the herbs, and will choose between Banyuls or red wine vinegar, or lemon juice. If I am serving meat, I will use vinegar; if I am serving fish, I will use lemon. Even though it changes color once the acid is added, it lasts a few days. It is really good on a piece of bread or with some fresh farmer's cheese as a snack.

— TRACI DES JARDINS, JARDINIERE (SAN FRANCISCO)

**Flavor Affinities**

parsley + bulgur wheat + garlic + lemon + mint + olive oil + scallions
parsley + butter + garlic
parsley + capers + garlic + lemon zest + olive oil
parsley + garlic
parsley + garlic + lemon zest
parsley + garlic + olive oil + Parmesan cheese + vinegar
parsley + lemon juice + olive oil + Parmesan cheese

**Parsnips**

**Season:** autumn–winter
**Taste:** sweet
**Weight:** medium–heavy
**Volume:** moderate
**Techniques/Tips:** Always use cooked (never raw): bake, boil, braise, deep-fry, grill, mash, puree, roast, steam

allspice
anise
apples
bacon
basil
bay leaf
beans, black, green
BUTTER, brown and/or unsalted
carrots
cheese, esp. creamy
chervil
chicken
chile peppers
chives
cinnamon
coriander
cream
cumin
curry
dill
duck
fennel: leaves, seeds
fish
game
game birds
garlic
ginger, esp. ground
greens, bitter / winter
honey
leeks
lemon, juice
lentils
lovage
mace
maple syrup
meats
mint
mirepoix
mirin
Dishes
Passion Fruit and Bonito Caramel
— Dominique and Cindy Duby, Wild Sweets (Vancouver)

Passion Fruit Flip: Passion Fruit + Honey + Lime + Raspberries + Yogurt
— Gale Gand, pastry chef, Tru (Chicago)

Passion Fruit Cream Enrob ed in White Chocolate, Ginger Caramel, and Mandarin Sorbet
— Michael Laiskonis, Le Bernardin (New York City)

mushrooms, porcini
mustard
NUTMEG
oil: peanut, sesame
olive oil
onions
orange
pancetta
parsley
Parmesan cheese
pears
pepper: black, white
potatoes
rosemary
sage
salt
shallots
soups
soy sauce
stews
stocks: chicken, vegetable
sugar, brown
tarragon
thyme
vegetables, root
vinegar, balsamic
wine, dry white
yogurt

Flavor Affinities
parsnips + butter + cream + potatoes
parsnips + carrots + nutmeg + potatoes
parsnips + cream + nutmeg
parsnips + honey + mustard
parsnips + pancetta + Parmesan cheese + pasta

PASSION FRUIT
Season: year-round
Taste: sweet
Weight: medium
Volume: moderate
Techniques: puree, raw

almonds
bananas
beverages
caramel
cashews
Champagne
chicken
chives
chocolate, esp. dark, white
cilantro
citrus fruit
coco nut and coconut milk
Cointreau
CREAM AND ICE CREAM
cream cheese
custard
egg whites
fish
fruits, tropical
ginger
kiwi fruit
lemon, juice
lime, juice
maccadamia nuts
mangoes
orange, juice
papayas
peaches
pears
pineapples
rum, esp. dark
salads, fruit
salad dressings
soups, fruit
strawberries
SUGAR
tapioca
tequila
vanilla
wine, ice
yogurt

Flavor Affinities
passion fruit + banana + orange
passion fruit + caramel + coconut
passion fruit + caramel + ginger + white chocolate
passion fruit + cream + ice wine
passion fruit + dark chocolate + ginger + raspberries

PASTA
Weight: medium-heavy
(depending on the cut)
Volume: quiet

anchovies
artichokes
asparagus
bacon
basil
beans, e.g., fava, white
beef
bottarga (tuna roe)
bread crumbs
broccoli
broths, esp. chicken, esp. with small pasta
butter
capers
cauliflower

CHEESE: cheddar, Comté,
Emmental, Fontina, goat,
Gorgonzola, Gouda, Gruyère,
mozzarella, PARMESAN,
pecorino, ricotta, ricotta salata

chicken
chickpeas
Dishes

Goat Cheese Tortelloni with Dried Orange and Fennel Pollen
— Mario Batali, Babbo (New York City)

Mint Tagliatelle with Lamb and Olives
— Mario Batali, Babbo (New York City)

Spaghettini with Spicy Artichokes, Sweet Garlic, and Lobster
— Mario Batali, Babbo (New York City)

Spaghetti Primavera with Prosciutto, Spring Garlic, Sugar Snap Peas, and Parmigiano
— Andrew Carmellini, A Voce (New York City)

Homemade Pappardelle with Lamb Bolognese and Sheep’s Milk Ricotta
— Andrew Carmellini, A Voce (New York City)

Homemade Soft Egg Yolk-Filled Raviolo with Truffled Butter
— Odette Fada, San Domenico (New York City)

Homemade Straccetti with Pesto and Clams
— Odette Fada, San Domenico (New York City)

Linguini with Clams, Pancetta, and Spicy Fresno Chile Pesto
— Matt Molina, Osteria Mozza (Los Angeles)

Farfalle with Stridoli, Walnuts, and Chanterelles
— Matt Molina, Osteria Mozza (Los Angeles)

Tagliatelle with Chanterelles and Parmigiano Reggiano
— Holly Smith, Café Juanita (Seattle)

Butternut Squash Ravioli with Oxtail Ragout and Sage Cream
— David Waltuck, Chanterelle (New York City)

chile peppers
chives
clams
cream, esp. with fettuccine, festonate, gnocchi, or pappardelle
cured meats: bacon, ham, pancetta, prosciutto
duck confit
eggplant
eggs
fennel
figs
fish (e.g., cod, salmon, swordfish, tuna)
game, esp. with fettuccine or pappardelle
garlic
greens (e.g., arugula, radicchio, stridoli)
ITALIAN CUISINE
lamb
leeks
lemon, juice
lobster
mascarpone
meat, esp. beef, lamb, oxtail, pork, venison
meat, ground, esp. with penne and rigatoni
mint
mushrooms, esp. wild
mussels
mustard, Dijon
octopus
OLIVE OIL, esp. with linguini and spaghetti
olives
onions
pancetta
parsley, flat-leaf
parsnips
peas, esp. with penne and rigatoni
pecans
Pairing Pastas with Sauces

Which sauces pair best with which pastas? We asked chef Odette Fada of New York City's San Domenico restaurant.

- **Angel hair**: In Italy, angel hair pasta is served to old people who can’t chew. It’s for grandparents, or for others to eat when they are sick. The problem with angel hair pasta is it’s so thin it's hard to cook al dente, and I like my pasta a little chewy.

- **Bow tie**: Fresh bow tie is great when made by hand, because it stays folded and doesn’t open into a square. I like to serve it with vegetables and tomato-based sauces.

- **Fettuccine**: This is a flavorful pasta and is good with a Bolognese sauce.

- **Fusilli**: I like their [corkscrew] shape, but they tend to break easily so they are not that attractive when you cook them in a restaurant setting. I like them at home in a salad or with some pesto because the pesto sticks to it.

- **Hollow pasta** [e.g., macaroni, penne, rigatoni]: Good with sauces that have big chunks in them so that the sauce pieces go inside whole. I like to do penne with fresh peas because the peas will slip inside, so you’ll sometimes get a little surprise when you’re chewing.

- **Pappardelle**: This is a strong, rustic pasta. I like it with rabbit sauce, a ragoût, or a fish sauce that has some character.

- **Small pasta** [e.g., rice-, shell-, or star-shaped]: These are good for soups and brothy dishes. For example, you would use them with a brothy fish dish.

- **Spaghetti**: Everything goes with spaghetti! It is a pasta that sauce sticks to. Everything from tomato sauce to pesto to pecorino with black pepper is great with spaghetti.

Or, if you’re starting with the sauce:

- **Carbonara**: Spaghetti or bucatini, you want a pasta that the sauce will stick to.

- **Cream**: Fettuccine, pappardelle, or gnocchi, since cream is so rich you want a strongly-flavored pasta or, in the last case, gnocchi — one that is made with some egg in it.

- **Game**: Pappardelle or fettuccine; you want an egg-rich pasta with some flavor.

- **Olive oil and garlic**: Spaghetti.

- **Pesto**: Fusilli.

- **Tomato**: This works with almost all pasta shapes, from small to large.

I have played with lots of flavored pasta doughs. One of my favorites is olive because it holds its flavor. Other flavors that hold up well are squid ink and saffron. I have also made a pappardelle with cocoa powder that I paired with game sauce that worked great. If you wanted to achieve a particular color, you could create red pasta with beets, green pasta with spinach, and black pasta with squid ink.

**SAUCES**: Bolognese (esp. with fettuccine), carbonara (esp. with bucatini or spaghetti), Mornay (esp. with macaroni), pesto (esp. with fusilli), rabbit (esp. with pappardelle), sardines (esp. with bucatini), tomato sausage scallops seafood: clams, crab, lobster, mussels, octopus, scallops, shrimp, squid shallots shrimp spinach pepper: black, white pine nuts pork potatoes prosciutto pumpkin rabbit, braised, esp. with pappardelle raisins red pepper flakes rosemary saffron sage salt, esp. kosher sardines
Chef Odette Fada of New York's San Domenico on Making Ravioli

I love ravioli! Anything and everything goes in my ravioli — I have used everything from chestnuts to cheese to fish, meat, and vegetables. You can vary the ravioli dough as well as the stuffing. For example, I serve ravioli stuffed with sea urchin and the dough is light and made with just flour and water. For a stronger filling like lamb, I will use some egg in the dough which makes it bigger flavored. One of my favorite ravioli显示器s is black truffle and pancetta. The truffle provides a crunchiness when you bite into it.

One of the greatest ravioli we do dates back to the chef for the last king of Italy at the beginning of the twentieth century. It is stuffed with spinach, truffle, Parmesan cheese, and an egg yolk, and served with butter, truffle, and Parmesan cheese. When the ravioli is cooked, it is served with the yolk warm but not cooked. It is truly an amazing dish.

In Italy during the winter, you would typically have some slices of sausage on top of a plate of lentils. I decided to combine the two into a ravioli dish. Now, one of my other favorite dishes is our ravioli stuffed with cotechino [sausage] and lentils. The lentils are cooked with rosemary, garlic, extra-virgin olive oil, and prosciutto skin, and go into the ravioli with the sausage, parsley, and Parmesan cheese. The dish is finished with some strong extra-virgin olive oil, parsley, and a crack of pepper.

Flavor Affinities

pasta + anchovies + bread crumbs + capers + red pepper flakes + garlic + olives
pasta + anchovies + mozzarella cheese
pasta + artichokes + garlic + lobster
pasta + bacon + black pepper + eggs + olive oil + pecorino cheese
pasta + basil + garlic + tomato
pasta + basil + peas + shrimp
pasta + basil + scallops + tomato
pasta + bread crumbs + greens + shrimp + white beans
pasta + bread crumbs + raisins + sardines
pasta + chickpeas + garlic + sage
pasta + chile peppers + lobster + mint
pasta + clams + pancetta
pasta + cream + peas + prosciutto
pasta + duck confit + wild mushrooms
pasta + fennel + sausage + tomato + white beans
pasta + figs + pancetta
pasta + Gorgonzola cheese + spinach + walnuts
pasta + Gruyère cheese + nutmeg + ricotta cheese
pasta + lamb + lemon + rosemary
pasta + lamb + mint + olives
pasta + lobster + peas
pasta + mushrooms + pumpkin + sage
pasta + pancetta + stridoli
pasta + Parmesan cheese + sage + tomato
pasta + pesto + white beans
pasta + pumpkin + pecans + ricotta cheese + sage
pasta + red pepper flakes + fennel + sardines + tomatoes
pasta + red pepper flakes + garlic + sardines + tomatos
pasta + ricotta cheese + veal shanks
pasta + rosemary + venison
pasta + spinach + ricotta cheese
pasta + tomatoes + ricotta cheese

squash: summer, winter
squid
sweet potato
thyme
tomatoes
tomatoes, sun-dried
truffles: black, white
veal
vegetables
venison
vinegar, esp. balsamic
walnuts
zucchini

Flavor Matchmaking: The Charts 253
PEACHES
Season: late spring–early autumn
Taste: sweet
Function: heating
Weight: medium
Volume: moderate
Techniques: bake, broil, grill, poach, raw, roast, sauté

allspice
ALMONDS, esp. toasted
anise hyssop
apples
apricots, puree
arugula
basil
bay leaf
beverages, esp. cocktails
blackberries
BLUEBERRIES
bourbon
brandy
butter, unsalted
buttermilk
Calvados
caramel
Champagne
cherries
chile peppers, green (e.g., jalapeño)
chocolate: dark, white
CINNAMON
cloves
coconut
cognac
Cointreau
*CREAM AND ICE CREAM
crème fraîche
currants, red: fruit, jelly
custards
desserts and dessert sauces
figs
fruit crisp
ginger
Grand Marnier
grenadine
hazelnuts
honey
ice, esp. pistachio
ice cream, esp. vanilla
Kirsch
lavender
LEMON: juice, zest
lemon thyme
lemon verbena
lime, juice
liqueurs: nut, orange, peach (e.g., schnapps)
mace
Madeira
maple syrup
Marsala
mascarpone
mint
molasses
nectarines
nutmeg
oatmeal
When I think of the essence of peaches, it's their smell — so I think of echoing that with the floralness of Moscato d'Asti. I'll add acidity, sweetness, and a little fat, such as through crème fraîche.
— TONY LIU, AUGUST (NEW YORK CITY)

I try not to cook peaches, or if I do, only for a short amount of time. A peach pie never tastes as good to me as a blueberry pie, because it tastes too cooked by the time you get it thick enough. So if I get peaches, I'll chop them up and put them on a tart shell that is already cooked instead.
— EMILY LUCHETTI, FARALLON (SAN FRANCISCO)

I like peaches with rich, round flavors like vanilla and honey.
— GINA DEPALMA, BABBO (NEW YORK CITY)

Japanese baby peaches are tiny peaches about the size of olives. We wanted to showcase the peaches and thought, What do peaches go with? Cream. We took that one step further and used yogurt instead. So we chose Greek yogurt, paired it with the peaches, then garnished the dish with Hawaiian pink sea salt, Greek olive oil, reduced balsamic vinegar, and micro mint. We turned the water strained from the yogurt into "air" [foam]. This is a dish that we serve as a pre-dessert and it works well because it is sweet and savory.
— KATSUYA FUKUSHIMA, MINIBAR (WASHINGTON, DC)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Flavor Affinities</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>peaches + apples + vanilla</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>peaches + blueberries + mascarpone</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>peaches + cream + honey + vanilla</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>peaches + figs + maple syrup</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>peaches + ginger + sugar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>peaches + orange liqueur + vanilla</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>peaches + sugar + yogurt</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**PEANUT OIL** (See Oil, Peanut)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>FLAVOR AFFINITIES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>peaches + + + + + + + +</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Anything we put **peanuts** on sells! Peanuts are associated with the South, so there is a regional appeal. We had a chicken breast with sugar snap peas, white radishes, toasted peanuts, basmati rice, and spicy peanut sauce.

— MARCEL DESAULNIERS, THE TRELLIS (WILLIAMSBURG, VIRGINIA)

**Peanuts** are not as versatile as other nuts. They have a great flavor and are pretty generic so you can use them on a lot of things and they pair well. Milk chocolate and peanuts work really well together. Peanuts pair great with bananas, especially if you cover the banana in chocolate and then roll it in peanuts and freeze it.

— EMILY LUCHETTI, FARALLON (SAN FRANCISCO)

tomatoes
turmeric
vanilla
**Vietnamese cuisine**
vinegar, red wine

---

**PEARS**

**Season:** autumn–winter

**Taste:** sweet

**Weight:** medium

**Volume:** quiet–moderate

**Techniques:** bake, deep-fry (e.g., as chips), grill, poach, raw, roast, sauté, stew

allspice
ALMONDS and almond paste
anise
apples: fruit, juice
apricots, esp. dried or pureed
arugula
bacon
basil
beets
blackberries
blueberries
borage
bourbon
brandy, esp. pear
butter, brown
**BUTTER, unsalted**
butterscotch
Calvados
CARAMEL
cardamom
cassis
celery
Champagne

**CHEESE:** BLUE, Brie, Cabrales, Cambozola, Camembert, Cantal, cheddar, feta, **goat**, Gorgonzola, Monterey Jack, Parmesan, pecorino, ricotta, Romano, ROQUEFORT, Stilton

cherries: dried, fresh
chestnuts
Chinese cuisine, esp. featuring Asian pears

**CHOCOLATE,** esp. dark, white
cider
CINNAMON
CLOVES
cranberries
cream and ice cream
cream cheese
crème anglaise
crème fraîche
custards
dates
dill
duck and duck confit
devil
fennel
figs
French cuisine
game
ginger
Grand Marnier
**hazelnuts**
This salad has roasted pear, Roquefort cheese, lemon, and olive oil and is garnished with borage flowers. The sauce is burnt caramel with pepper deglazed with Coteaux du Layon, which is sweet but higher in acid than Sauternes. The caramel sauce keeps you awake!

Cheese and fruit: Blue cheese is sharp and hits your palate, then the pear calms it down.

Salad greens: We use herbs in our salad and this one has fennel, thyme, tarragon, parsley, and anise hyssop.

Borage flowers: Eating a borage flower is like eating an oyster! It is briny. In the summer when they are in season, if you taste a couple it is reminiscent of a mild oyster.

— GABRIEL KREUTHER, THE MODERN (NEW YORK CITY)

Apples are more popular than pears because when you go to the store, pears are all hard. You buy them, bring them home, and wait forever for them to ripen. You have to have a premeditated use for pears.

— EMILY LUCHETTI, FARALLON (SAN FRANCISCO)

I like pears poached because I’m not fond of their texture. I also make a pear tart with pears poached in lemon zest and vanilla, and then combined with custard, honey, lemon, and vanilla. It is paired with a honey grappa zabaglione and topped with grated Pecorino Toscano cheese grated over it as if it were pasta. The dish sounds a little crazy but all these flavors are classic combinations found in Italy. Pears are often infused with grappa in the north of Italy. Pears, honey, and pecorino is a classic combination in Tuscany. Pecorino goes with every flavor. Honey carries all the flavors forward.

— GINA DEPALMA, BABBO (NEW YORK CITY)
sabayon  
salads: fruit, green  
salt (pinch)  
sour cream  
squab  
squash: butternut, winter  
star anise  
strawberries, esp. sauce  
SUGAR: brown, white  
sweet potatoes  
toffee  
VANILLA  
VINEGAR: balsamic, champagne, sherry, white, white wine  
WALNUTS  
watercress  
whiskey  
WINE: red (e.g., Burgundy), strong red (e.g., Cabernet Sauvignon, Zinfandel), dry white (e.g., Riesling), sparkling (e.g., Champagne), sweet (e.g., ice wine)

**Flavor Affinities**

- pears + amaretto + hazelnuts  
- pears + arugula + Parmesan cheese + vinaigrette + walnuts  
- pears + bacon + bitter greens + goat cheese  
- pears + blue cheese + olive oil + red wine vinegar + watercress  
- pears + caramel + balsamic vinegar  
- pears + caramel + chestnuts + crème fraîche  
- pears + caramel + chocolate  
- pears + cinnamon + ginger + honey  
- pears + fennel + Parmesan cheese + balsamic vinegar + walnuts  
- pears + ginger + honey + vanilla  
- pears + Gorgonzola cheese + vinaigrette + walnuts  
- pears + honey + lime + vanilla  
- pears + honey + rosemary  
- pears + maple syrup + walnuts  
- pears + mascarpone + pistachios + red wine  
- pears + pecorino cheese + balsamic vinegar  
- pears + Roquefort cheese + sugar + vanilla + red wine  
- pears + Roquefort cheese + walnuts  
- pears + Stilton cheese + hazelnuts + balsamic vinegar

**Dishes**

- **Pear and Fresh Pecorino-Filled Ravioli with Aged Pecorino and Crushed Black Pepper**  
  — Lidia Bastianich, Felidia (New York City)

- **Grilled Pear and Roquefort Tart with Caramelized Onions and Walnuts**  
  — Sandy D’Amato, Sanford (Milwaukee)

- **Grilled Pear Steak with Polenta Frites and Orange-Tarragon Sauce**  
  — Dominique and Cindy Duby, Wild Edibles (Vancouver)

- **Salad of Spicy Poached Pear, Fresh Ricotta, Smoked Almonds, and Edamame with Verjus Dressing**  
  — Brad Farmerie, Monday Room (New York City)

- **Sticky Toffee Pudding with Cinnamon-Sautéed Pears**  
  — Gale Gand, at the 2005 James Beard Awards gala reception

- **Warm Semolina Pancake, Poached Pears, Cumin**  
  — Johnny Iuzzini, pastry chef, Jean Georges (New York City)

- **Honey-Roasted Pear Napoleon**  
  — Kate Zuckerman, pastry chef, Chanterelle (New York City)

**PEAS — IN GENERAL**

(See also Snap Peas)  
**Season:** late spring–summer  
**Taste:** sweet  
**Weight:** light–medium  
**Volume:** quiet–moderate  
**Techniques:** boil, braise, sauté, steam

- arugula  
- asparagus  
- bacon  
- BASIL  
- bay leaf  
- bouquet garni  
- BUTTER, unsalted  
- cardamom  
- CARROTS and carrot juice  
- cayenne  
- celery  
- cheese, esp. Parmesan, ricotta  
- chervil
chicken
chile peppers: dried red, fresh
green chives
cilantro, (e.g., as Indian cuisine)
cinnamon
cloves
coriander
crab
CREAM, HEAVY
crème fraîche
cumin
curry powder
dill
fava beans
fish
French cuisine
garam masala
garlic
ginger
ham and ham hocks
honey
Italian cuisine
leeks
lemon, juice
lettuce, Boston
lime, juice
lobster
marjoram
mascarpone
MINT
mushrooms, esp. morels
oil, peanut
olive oil
onions: pearl, red, spring, white
pancetta
parsley, flat-leaf
pasta
pepper: black, white
pork
potatoes
poultry
prosciutto
risotto
rosemary
sage
salt: kosher, sea
savory, winter
scallions
scallops
shallots
shrimp
snap peas
sorrel
Spanish cuisine, esp. southern
spinach
stocks: chicken, vegetable
sugar
tarragon
thyme
tomatoes
turmeric
vinaigrette
vinegar, champagne
watercress
wine, dry white
yogurt
Flavor Affinities
peas + bacon + cream + shallots
peas + basil + potatoes
peas + celery + olive oil + onions + chicken stock + sugar
peas + custard + Parmesan cheese
peas + lobster + pasta
peas + marjoram + mascarpone + Parmesan cheese
peas + mint + morel mushrooms
peas + mushrooms + ricotta cheese
peas + onions + pancetta + sage

Bronze fennel grows all over Seattle. One day I walked outside eating peas while going out to get mint for my pea salad. I ate a bite of fennel and thought, “By Jove, I’ve got a dish!” Bronze fennel is a non-bulb fennel that has an amazing fennel and earthy flavor.

— HOLLY SMITH, CAFÉ JUANITA (SEATTLE)

Dishes

Spring Pea Fricassée with Morels and Butter Lettuce
— Daniel Boulud, at the 2003 James Beard Awards gala reception

Chilled Sweet Pea Soup “à la Française” Thumbelina Carrot Salad with Cilantro and Lobster
— Daniel Boulud, Daniel (New York City)

Pea Velouté with Apple-Smoked Bacon, Louisiana Crayfish, Savory Cream
— Daniel Boulud, Daniel (New York City)

Garden Pea Soup with Morel Cream
— Daniel Humm, Eleven Madison Park (New York City)

Sweet Pea Soup with Caramelized Vidalia Onion, Apple-Smoked Bacon, and Mint
— Alfred Portale, Gotham Bar and Grill (New York City)

Sweet Pea Sorbet with Preserved Green Almond and Marcona Almond Milk, Fuji Apple with Butterscotch, Rye, and Thyme
— Charlie Trotter, Charlie Trotter’s (Chicago)

Fresh Pea Ravioli with Sweet Onions Sauce and Smoked Pork Reduction
— David Waltuck, Chanterelle (New York City)

PECAN OIL (See Oil, Pecan)

PECANS (See also Nuts — In General)
Season: autumn
Taste: bitter–sweet
Weight: medium–heavy
Volume: quiet–moderate

almonds
apples
apricots
baked goods (e.g., breads, cookies, pies)
bananas
blackberries
blueberries
bourbon
brandy

breakfast (e.g., pancakes, waffles)
butter, unsalted
butterscotch
CARAMEL
cheese, goat
cherries
chicken
chocolate: dark, white
cinnamon
coffee
cognac
corn syrup: light, dark
cranberries
cream
dates
ginger
grapefruit
grapes
hazelnuts
honey
ice cream
kumquats
lemon, juice
liqueurs, orange
MAPLE SYRUP
mascarpone
Mexican sauces
nectarines
nutmeg
oats and oatmeal
orange
peaches
pears
persimmons
plums
pork
prunes
pumpkin
quince
raisins
raspberries
rice, wild
rum
salads
salt
sour cream
Southern cuisine (American)
squash, butternut
stir-fried dishes
Dishes

Pecan Praline Cheesecake
   — Terrance Brennan, Artisanal (New York City)

Pecan Praline Pancakes with Brown Butter Bananas and Rum Raisins
   — Daniel Humm, Eleven Madison Park (New York City)

Southern Butter Pecan Ice Cream with Hot Caramel Sauce
   — Patrick O'Connell, The Inn at Little Washington (Washington, Virginia)

Phyllo Spirals with Garden Herbs, Rio Grande Organic Pecans, and Pure Luck Feta
   — Monica Pope, T’afia (Houston)

We are using pecans on a savory dish of scallops and shrimp, ham, shiitake mushrooms, shallots, and pecan-studded basmati rice.
   — MARCEL DESAULNIERS, THE TRELLIS (WILLIAMSBURG, VIRGINIA)

strawberries
stuffing
SUGAR: BROWN, white
sweet potatoes
tea
vanilla
walnuts
whiskey
wine: red, sweet

PEPPER, BLACK

Taste: pungent, hot
Function: warming
Weight: light–medium
Volume: moderate–loud
Tips: Pepper suggests “false heat” and also stimulates the appetite.
Add at the end of the cooking process.

apricots
basil
BEEF, esp. roasted
berries
cardamom
cheese
cherries
 cinnamon
cloves
coconut milk
coriander
cumin
eggs
fruit, fresh
game
garlic
ginger
Indian cuisine
lamb
lemon, juice
lentils
lime, juice
meats, red
nutmeg
nuts
olive oil
olives
parsley
pineapple
pork
poultry
pumpkin (e.g., pie)
rosemary
salads
SALT
sauces
sauces
sausage
seafood, heartier
soups
spice cake
STEAKS, esp. grilled
strawberries
thyme
tomatoes
turmeric
veal

PEPPER, GREEN (as peppercorns)

Taste: hot
Weight: light–medium
Volume: moderate
Tips: Add at the end of the cooking process.
The flavor is less sharp than black pepper.

avocados
bay leaf
beef
brandy
butter
chicken
cream
curries
duck
game
garlic
ham
meats, esp. grilled and/or red
mustard
parsley
pâtés
pork
sage
salads and salad dressings
salmon
sauces: creamy, white
seafood
shrimp
stock, veal
turkey
veal
vegetables
venison
wine, white

PEPPER, PINK

Taste: hot
Weight: light–medium
Volume: moderate–loud
Tips: Add at the end of the cooking process.

butter
chervil
I like white pepper with most white fish, and black pepper with tuna and red meat. White pepper works with halibut because it does not overwhelm the fish. Black pepper has a complex flavor and is spicy, which can be distracting. The problem with many peppers like cayenne or chipotle is that they are so strong they can burn. That is not a problem for me, but it is for our clientele. We use piment d'Espelette, which is spicy but sweet.

— ERIC RIPERT, LE BERNARDIN (NEW YORK CITY)

You have to be careful with black pepper because it can be a vehicle to add flavor — but if misused, it will mask flavor. I might add the tiniest little pinch before a dessert gets served to punch it up. I use black pepper with fresh fruit, especially cherries.

— MICHAEL LAIKONIS, LE BERNARDIN (NEW YORK CITY)

To me, tuna doesn't even taste like tuna anymore unless it's seared with my pepper mix of toasted and ground black and pink peppercorns, coriander, and star anise. The same mix is also great on beef, buffalo, and venison.

— SHARON HAGE, YORK STREET (DALLAS)

We don't have sixteen types of pepper here; we use a basic black Tellicherry peppercorn and a little bit of red pepper flakes. I will occasionally go to an Asian market to get a pepper that has a sweet element to it, as these also tend to have a fruitiness to them that works well in braised dishes.

— SHARON HAGE, YORK STREET (DALLAS)
ham before frying them. You get sweetness and spice from the peppers, saltiness from the ham, creaminess from the cheese, and crunchiness from the frying. Doing so gives them so much flavor, I don’t need to add anything else.

— BOB IACOVONE, CUVEÉ (NEW ORLEANS)

PEPPERS, PIQUILLO
(Spanish peppers)
Taste: hot
Weight: medium
Volume: moderate–loud
Techniques: roast

aioli
almonds
anchovies
artichokes
asparagus
beef
bread
calamari

CHEESE: goat, manchego
chicken
chickpeas
chocolate, bitter
chorizo
clams
crab
eggs
fish, esp. cod, redfish, white
garlic
lamb
lemon
meat
mushrooms

PEPPERS, SPANISH
Guindilla peppers are used to give heat in Spanish cooking. If you were cooking beans, you would add your parsley sprig, half an onion, garlic, carrot, and one guindilla pepper. Nora peppers are smoked, bell-shaped peppers from Catalonia used for romesco sauce. They are similar to Mexican guajillo peppers. Chorizero peppers are bittersweet. Their pulp is used in salsa vizcaina, which is a red sauce made with a lot of onions cooked down sweet, the chorizero pepper pulp, and either fish or bean stock. It’s great served on fish or tripe.

— ALEXANDRA RAIJ, TÍA POL
(NEW YORK CITY)

OLIVE OIL
olives
onions
orange
paprika, smoked
pork
potatoes
salads
salmon
salt
seafood
shrimp
soups
Spanish cuisine
stews
sugar
tomatoes
tuna

PERSIMMONS
Season: autumn–winter
Taste: sweet–sour
Weight: medium–heavy
Volume: moderate–loud
Techniques: bake, broil, raw

almonds
apples
avocados
bourbon
brandy
caramel
cashews
cheese, esp. creamy, goat
chile peppers, serrano
chocolate, white
cinnamon
cloves
coffee
cognac
cream and ice cream
custard
endive
friséé
ginger
grapes, esp. red
hazelnuts
honey
Kirsch
kiwi
kumquats
lemon: juice, zest
liqueurs, esp. orange
mace
maple syrup
nutmeg
oatmeal
oil, hazelnut
olive oil
orange
pears
pecans
pepper, black
pomegranates
pork
poultry
prosciutto

Dishes
Green Olives Stuffed with Piquillo Peppers and Anchovies
— José Andrés, Café Atlántico (Washington, DC)

Piquillo Peppers Filled with Manchego Cheese, Avocado Leaf — and Hoja Santa —
Seasoned Refried Beans and Vanilla — Bitter Chocolate Sauce
— Maricel Presilla, Zafra (Hoboken, New Jersey)
Because of the texture and unique flavor of a **persimmon**, no matter what you do it will always taste like persimmon pudding. I decided two years ago to stop trying to do anything else with persimmons. Why try and reinvent the wheel? To work with persimmons, you first put them in the freezer overnight to ripen, then peel and puree them. Persimmons are pretty astringent, so you need to add a lot of spices and sugar to them. The combination of allspice, cinnamon, and ginger that you see in traditional recipes is nice with persimmons, and adds an interesting complexity to the flavor.

--- EMILY LUCETTI, FARALLON (SAN FRANCISCO)

**Flavor Affinities**

| persimmons | allspice | cinnamon | ginger |

---

**PHEASANT**

- **Season:** autumn
- **Weight:** medium
- **Volume:** moderate
- **Techniques:** grill, roast
- **Tips:** Wrap with bacon to keep from drying out when roasting.

---

**PIMENTON** (See also Paprika)

I don't even like to use the word "paprika" when referring to **pimenton**. It is not the same as Hungarian paprika, which is just dried pepper and doesn't taste like anything else. The Spanish were the first to plant peppers. Our **pimenton** has the right touch of sweetness, bitterness, and smoke.Used in a dish it makes the dish a whole new thing. Sprinkled on octopus, it is astonishing.

--- JOSÉ ANDRES, CAFÉ ATLÁNTICO (WASHINGTON, DC)
Dishes
Pineapple-Vanilla Vacherin with Coconut Gelée
— Daniel Boulud, Restaurant Daniel, New York City
Warm Pineapple Cake "Sottosopra" with Rum Zabaione
— Gina DePalma, pastry chef, Babbo (New York City)
Exotic Fruit and Mint Salad, Star Anise Tuile
— Dominique and Cindy Duby, Wild Sweets (Vancouver)
Pineapple Rum Soup with Passion Fruit and Mango Gelée, Coconut Tapioca,
Pink Peppercorn–Pineapple Sorbet
— Gale Gand, pastry chef, Tru (Chicago)
Pineapple Sorbet, Candied Pine Nut Tart, and Pineapple Chip
— Thomas Keller, The French Laundry (Yountville, California)
Fermented Pineapple Peel Drink
— Maricel Presilla, Zafra (Hoboken, New Jersey)
Grilled Pineapple, Avocado, and Watercress
— Maricel Presilla, Zafra (Hoboken, New Jersey)
Roasted Pineapple with Pistachio Ice Cream
— Eric Ripert, Le Bernardin (New York City)

PINEAPPLES
Season: winter–summer
Taste: sweet
Weight: medium
Volume: moderate
Techniques: bake, broil, grill, poach, raw, roast, sauté

allspice
apricots
avocado
baked goods
BANANAS
basil
brandy
butter, unsalted
caramel
cardamom
cashews
cayenne
cheese: blue (some)
chicken
Pineapple is 80 to 90 percent water. We'll freeze the pineapple, then pull it out and put it in a colander, and let the juice run out of it — which has all the flavor of the pineapple. After pressing out all the juice, we'll throw out the now-flavorless pulp, and use just the juice. You can do the same with strawberries or other fruits to obtain a clear juice, which you can use in drinks or, frozen and scraped, as fruit crystals to serve with a dessert.

— DOMINIQUE AND CINDY DUBY, WILD SWEETS (VANCOUVER)

I like the combination of rosemary with pineapple.

— MICHAEL LAISKONIS, LE BERNARDIN (NEW YORK CITY)

Pineapple benefits from a touch of vanilla.

— GINA DEPALMA, BABBO (NEW YORK CITY)

chile peppers: fresh, dried, red, green (e.g., jalapeño)
chocolate
cilantro
cinnamon
cloves
COCONUT: meat, milk
cognac
Cointreau
cream and ice cream
cream, Bavarian style
curry
fennel seeds
fruits, tropical
ginger
Grand Marnier
grapefruit
ham
honey
Kirsch
kiwi fruit
kumquats
lemon: juice, zest
lemongrass
LIME: juice, zest
macadamia nuts
MANGOES
maple syrup
marinades
meat
mint
olive oil
onion, red

oranges: fruit, marmalade
papaya
passion fruit
pepper, black
pistachios
pomegranate
poultry
raspberries
rice/rice pudding
rosemary
RUM
saffron
salads, fruit
salt, esp. fleur de sel, kosher
seafood (e.g., shrimp)
shallots

Flavor Affinities

pineapple + avocado + watercress
pineapple + banana + ginger + rum + sugar + vanilla
pineapple + berries + citrus + mangoes + star anise
pineapple + coconut + honey + oranges
pineapple + ice cream + brown sugar + vanilla
pineapple + lime + sugar
pineapple + Madeira + brown sugar + vanilla
pineapple + rum + sugar
pineapple + rum + vanilla + walnuts

spinach
star anise
strawberries
SUGAR: brown, white
sweet potatoes
Szechuan pepper
tamarind
tapioca
VANILLA
vinegar, rice
walnuts
watercress
wine, sweet (e.g., Vin Santo)
yogurt
You have to be careful with pine nuts because they are so strong that they will dominate a dessert. If I use even a small amount in an apple dessert, it turns it into a pine nut dessert.
— EMILY LUCHETTI, FARALLON (SAN FRANCISCO)

Pine nuts are really fatty and luxurious, so I like to use salt with them for balance. Even in a pesto, you notice the flavor of pine nuts versus using walnuts or no nuts.
— GINA DEPALMA, BABBIO (NEW YORK CITY)

### PINE NUTS

**Weight:** light  
**Volume:** moderate  
**Techniques:** toast

- apples  
- apricots  
- basil  
- bell peppers  
- Central American cuisine  
- cheese: feta, goat, Parmesan, ricotta  
- cookies  
- Eastern Mediterranean cuisine  
- French cuisine, esp. southern  
- garlic  
- honey  
- Italian cuisine, esp. southern  
- lemon  
- liqueurs, orange  
- mascarpone  
- Mexican sauces  
- Middle Eastern cuisine  
- Moroccan cuisine  
- olive oil  
- onions  
- orange  
- pears  
- PESTO (key ingredient)  
- prunes  
- raisins  
- raspberries  
- rice  
- rum  
- sauces  
- Spanish cuisine, esp. southern  
- sugar  
- vanilla  
- vegetables, esp. roasted  
- walnuts  
- wine: red, sweet

**Flavor Affinities**

- pine nuts + apples + apricots + rosemary  
- pine nuts + basil + garlic + olive oil + Parmesan cheese (pesto)

### PINOT NOIR

**Weight:** light-medium  
**Volume:** quiet–moderate

- beef  
- chicken  
- duck  
- lamb  
- mushrooms  
- pork  
- salmon  
- tuna  
- veal

### PIQUANCY

**Taste:** hot  
**Volume:** loud  
**Function:** warming  
**Tips:** Stimulates appetite; enhances other flavors (e.g., salty, sour).

Heat [aka piquancy] can come from a grind of black pepper when you are cooking, or at the last second on top of a salad before it goes out. Heat can also come from some jalapeño in steamed cockles with ginger and lemongrass. In either case, heat adds a brightness to the dish.
— SHARON HAGE, YORK STREET (DALLAS)
Pistachios are a distinctively flavored nut. You need to be sure that what you pair with them will stand up. They go well with raspberries but not strawberries because the latter are softer in flavor.
— EMILY LUCHETTI, FARALLON (SAN FRANCISCO)

Pistachios look great with other nuts because you get green and brown alongside each other. They can be pretty mild so they are less about flavor and more about color and texture. Since pistachios are so mild I like to feature them solo or in a large quantity so they don’t get lost. I make a chocolate semifreddo and there is pistachio in the semifreddo, there is pistachio paste, they are on the plate, and they are in the sauce. They are front and center.
— GINA DEPALMA, BABBO (NEW YORK CITY)

dates
duck
Eastern Mediterranean cuisine
devine
figs: dried, fresh
foie gras
ginger
gooseberries
honey
Italian cuisine
kumquats
lavender
leeks
lemon
mangoes
mascarpone
Moroccan cuisine
nectarines
orange
parsley
pasta and pasta sauces
pastry
pâté
PEACHES
poultry
prunes
quince
raisins, esp. golden
raspberries
rice
rosemary
rose water
sausages
sugar
vanilla
watermelon
yogurt

AVOID
strawberries, which pistachios can easily overpower

PLANTAINS, GREEN
Botanical relatives: bananas
Weight: medium
Volume: quiet–moderate
Techniques: bake, boil, deep-fry, mash, sauté
Tips: Look for green plantains without any yellow.

African cuisine
bacon
butter

PLANTAINS, SWEET
Taste: sweet
Botanical relatives: bananas
Weight: medium
Volume: moderate
Techniques: bake, boil, deep-fry, sauté
Tip: Look for yellow to black plantains that ripen to black.

African cuisine
allspice
butter
Central American cuisine
chicken
chocolate
cinnamon
cloves
coconut
cranberries
cream and ice cream
PLUMS

**Season:** late spring–early autumn  
**Taste:** sweet, astringent  
**Weight:** light  
**Volume:** moderate  
**Techniques:** bake, poach, raw, stew

...allspice, almonds, anise...
Plums, Dried (cont.)

Cumin
Currants
Custard
Dates
Figs, esp. dried
French cuisine
Game
Game birds
Ginger
Hazelnuts
Honey, wildflower
Lemon, zest
Liqueurs: almond, other nuts
Macadamia nuts
Maple syrup
Moroccan cuisine
Oatmeal
Orange, zest
Pâté
Pears
Pecans
Pepper, black
Pine nuts
Pistachios
Pork
Port, esp. tawny
Quince
Rabbit
Raisins
Rice pudding
Rum
Southern Comfort
Star anise
Stews
Sugar: brown, white
Teas, esp. black or Earl Grey
Thyme
Turkey
Vanilla
Vinegar: champagne, white wine
WALNUTS
Whiskey
WINE: dry red (e.g., Bordeaux, Cabernet Sauvignon), Sauternes, sweet white (e.g., Muscat)

Flavor Affinities
Prunes + allspice + bay leaf + cinnamon + black pepper
Prunes + apples + brandy + vanilla + yogurt
Prunes + Armagnac + chocolate
Prunes + Armagnac + crème fraîche
Prunes + brandy + cream + vanilla
Prunes + cheese + cumin + walnuts
Prunes + cognac + honey + Sauternes

Polenta
Weight: medium
Volume: quiet
Techniques: simmer
Tips: Grill or sauté cooked polenta.

Bay leaf
Beef
Bell peppers, esp. red
Butter, unsalted
Cheese: Fontina, Gorgonzola,
Gruyère, mozzarella,
Parmesan, Taleggio
Chervil
Chicken
Chives
Cream / milk
Egg, yolks
Game birds
Garlic
Herbs
Honey
Italian cuisine, esp. northern
Marjoram
Mascarpone
Mushrooms, esp. chanterelles,
Porcini, shiitakes
Oil: truffle, walnut
Olive oil
Parsley, flat-leaf
Pepper: black, white
Pork
Red pepper flakes
Rosemary
Salt: kosher, sea
Sausages
Scallions
Stocks: chicken, vegetable
Thyme
Tomatoes and tomato sauce
Truffles, white
Walnuts

Flavor Affinities
Polenta + chanterelle
Mushrooms + white truffle oil
Polenta + Gorgonzola cheese + mascarpone + walnuts
Polenta + Parmesan cheese + rosemary

Pomegranates
Season: autumn
Taste: sour, sweet
Function: cooling
Weight: light-medium
Volume: moderate
Techniques: raw, ice/sorbet

Allspice
Almonds
Arugula
Avocados

Dishes
Cornish Game Hens with Pomegranate Sauce and Toasted Almonds
— Rafih Benjelloun, Imperial Fez (Atlanta)
Pomegranate Glazed Specialty Chicken Breast with Coconut-Onion Curry
— Vikram Vij and Meeru Dhalwala, Vij’s (Vancouver)
bananas
beets
cardamom
chicken
chile peppers
chocolate, white
cinnamon
cloves
coconut
coriander
couscous
cream
cucumbers
cumin
curry
desserts
fish
garlic
ginger, esp. fresh
grapefruit
hazelnuts
honey
hummus
kumquat
lamb
legumes
lemon, juice
lime, juice
meats, roasted
Middle Eastern cuisine
nutmeg
olive oil
onions
orange, juice
parsley
pine nuts
pomegranate molasses (key ingredient)
pork
poultry (e.g., turkey)
SALADS, esp. cucumber, fruit, green
sesame seeds
sorbets
stewed dishes
sugar
tequila
turmeric

What is nice about pomegranates is that they are very flavorful but don’t have a lot of sugar in them. They also have a unique flavor that is not like anything else. It is one of the few flavors that have come around in popularity because they have made it easier to use [via pomegranate juice, molasses, etc.]. Cleaning them to use just the seeds can be a pain in the neck. However, I use the juice because it makes a great sorbet.
— EMILY LUCHETTI, FARALLON (SAN FRANCISCO)

vinegar: balsamic, red wine
walnuts
wine: port, red, white

Flavor Affinities
pomegranates + almonds +
cinnamon + cloves + garlic +
ginger + honey
pomegranates + chicken +
coconut + curry + onions
pomegranates + lemon + sugar

POMEGRANATE MOLASSES
Taste: sweet, sour
Weight: medium–heavy
Volume: moderate–loud

allspice
beef
chicken
chile peppers
cinnamon
cloves
duck
game
game birds
ginger
lamb
marinades
meats
Middle Eastern cuisine

Pomelo is good in salads. During the summer, we will mix it with pickled ginger and a couple of other ingredients and serve it on chicken or fish.
— BRAD FARMERIE, PUBLIC
(NEW YORK CITY)

mustard
mustard seeds
olive oil
pepper
pork
poultry
salad dressings
vinegar, balsamic
walnuts

POMELOS (See also Grapefruit)
Taste: sour, sweet
Weight: light
Volume: loud
Techniques: broil, raw

avocado
chicken
chili powder
coconut
crab
fish
fish sauce
ginger, pickled
lemongrass
maple
onions
peanuts
pomegranate
salads
salt
scallops
shrimp
spinach

Flavor Affinities
pomelo + pickled ginger + fish
pomelo + salt + chili powder
PONZU SAUCE
Taste: sour
Weight: light-medium
Volume: moderate-loud

beef
dashi
fish, esp. grilled or raw
Japanese cuisine
meat, esp. grilled
sashimi
shellfish
soy sauce
ume (Japanese plum)

POPPY SEEDS
Taste: sweet
Weight: light
Volume: quiet

apples
Asian cuisine
BAKED GOODS (e.g., breads, cakes, cookies, pastries)
beans, green
butter, unsalted
buttermilk
cabbage
carrots
cauliflower
cheese, ricotta
cinnamon
cloves
cream
curry powder
desserts
eggplant
eggs and egg dishes
fish
fruits
ginger
honey
Indian cuisine
lemon
Mediterranean cuisine
noodles
nutmeg
onions, esp. sweet

pasta
pastry
potatoes
rice
salads and salad dressings, esp.
  creamy
sauces, esp. creamy
sesame seeds
sour cream
spinach
strawberries
sugar
Turkish cuisine
vanilla
vegetables
walnuts
zucchini

capers
caraway seeds
cardamom
carrots
cayenne
celery
cheese: Gruyère, Jack
chile peppers, esp. anchos, dried
  red, jalapeno
chili powder
Chinese cuisine
chives
cider
cilantro
cinnamon
cloves
corn
cranberries
cream
cumin
curry powder
fennel
fennel seeds
figs
fish sauce, Thai
French cuisine, esp. southern
fruit: dried, fresh
GARLIC
ginger: fresh, ground dried
ham, Serrano
honey
horseradish
Italian cuisine, esp. southern
ketchup
Korean cuisine, esp. northern
LEMON: juice, zest
lemon grass
lemon verbena
lentils
lime, juice
mace
mangoes: green, ripe
marjoram
Mexican cuisine
mint, esp. spearmint
You'll often see what is essentially clam chowder [without the clams] used as a sauce: the combination of pork — whether it's bacon, chorizo, or whatever — and thyme, served with potatoes and cream. It could be served with something poached or sautéed. It is a cute reworking of something that is classic.
— DAVID WALTUCK, CHANTERELLE (NEW YORK CITY)

I like the combination of pork with fruit. With a pork chop, fresh and dried figs or strawberries would all work.
— MARCEL DESAULNIERS, THE TRELlIS (WILLIAMSBURG, VIRGINIA)

Sauces often don't do justice to the meat they're saucing. For that reason, we don't use veal stock with pork, which hides the flavor of the meat. Instead, we want to do everything we can to emphasize the flavor of the pork itself. So, we'll roast the pork scraps and bones and make a pork stock instead. In the summertime, to keep it light, we won't even add wine.
— DAN BARBER, BLUE HILL AT STONE BARNs (POCANTICO HILLS, NEW YORK)
Pork can handle all the sweet spices, including allspice, cinnamon, and clove.
— BRADFORD THOMPSON, MARY ELAINE’S AT THE PHOENICIAN
(SCOTTSDALE, ARIZONA)

sugar (pinch)
sweet potatoes
Tabasco sauce
tangerine, juice
tea, black (e.g., Lapsang Souchong)
thyme
tomatoes and tomato paste
turmeric
turnips
vanilla
verjus
vermouth, dry
Vietnamese cuisine
VINEGAR: balsamic, red wine, rice wine, sherry, white wine
walnuts
watercress
wine: dry red, white
Worcestershire sauce
yogurt

Flavor Affinities
pork + allspice + mace
pork + apples + mustard
pork + bacon + mustard + sauerkraut
pork + chile peppers + cilantro + garlic + lime + peanuts
pork + cinnamon + star anise
pork + coriander + honey + soy sauce
pork + clove + garlic + orange
pork + cream + potatoes + thyme
pork + cream + potatoes + thyme
pork + curry + garlic + yogurt
pork + fennel + garlic
pork + garlic + ginger + molasses
pork + ginger + honey + soy sauce
pork + mustard + sauerkraut
pork + port + rosemary

I’m sometimes inspired by looking back to my childhood and the combinations of flavors I liked. I was a pretty picky eater growing up, but I loved my macaroni and cheese, and bacon and eggs. I came up with a take on bacon and eggs substituting pork belly for the bacon. I love pork belly — it is a poor man’s foie gras, the way it just melts in your mouth. I make the eggs in a double boiler that gives them a creamy texture, and finish them with fresh herbs. For the belly, we grill it and then braise it in citrus, champagne vinegar, and veal stock for six hours. Then at serving, we grill it again and top it with a “sweet heat” sauce which is like a barbecue sauce with layers and layers of flavor.
— BOB IACOVONE, CUVÉE (NEW ORLEANS)
**Dishes**

Grilled Pork Chop with Artichokes, Cipollini, and Aceto Manodori
— Mario Batali, Babbo (New York City)

Pork Chop, Creamed Sweet Corn, Pan-Fried Summer Squash, and Crushed Blackberries
— Cory Schreiber, Wildwood (Portland, Oregon)

---

garlic
ginger
greens
honey
lemon, juice
lentils
molasses
mustard (esp. Dijon) and mustard seeds
olive oil
onions
peaches
pepper, black
polenta
potatoes: mashed, steamed
prosciutto
rosemary
SAGE
sauerkraut
spinach
stock, chicken
sugar: brown, white
tomatoes
vanilla
vinegar: balsamic, cider

**Flavor Affinities**
pork chop + apples + ginger + sage
pork chop + arugula + tomatoes
pork chop + greens + sweet potatoes
pork chop + peaches + balsamic vinegar

---

**PORK — HAM** (See Ham)

**PORK — LOIN**
Techniques: dry-heat cooking (e.g., bake, braise, grill, roast, sauté)

---

**PORK — RIBS**
Techniques: bake, barbecue, braise, broil, grill, roast, sauté

---

cabbage
chile peppers, guajillo
chili powder
cider
coffee
coriander
cumin
garlic
ginger
hoisin sauce
honey
hot sauce
ketchup
lemon grass
liquid smoke
mirepoix
molasses
mustard, Dijon
olive oil
onions, esp. white
oregano
paprika: hot, smoked
parsley, flat-leaf
pepper, black
potatoes
salt: kosher, sea
sesame oil
soy sauce
sugar, brown
Tabasco sauce
thyme
tomatoes and tomato puree
vinegar: apple cider, balsamic, red wine, sherry, white wine
Worcestershire sauce

**PORK — SAUSAGE**
(See Sausages)

**PORK — SHOULDER**
Techniques: moist-heat cooking (e.g., barbecue, braise, stew)

achiote
allspice
andouille sausage (key ingredient)
apples
barbecue sauce
bay leaf
cayenne
chile peppers
cinnamon
coriander
cornmeal (e.g., grits, polenta)
couscous
cumin
five-spice powder
GARLIC
ginger
honey
lemon
lime
maple syrup
milk
mushrooms
orange
oregano
paprika
port
quince
rice
rum
sage
soy sauce
sugar, brown
thyme
tomatoes
vinegar
wine, red
beans, green
cardamom
cilantro
cinnamon
corn
fennel
ginger
lime
maple syrup
marjoram
mushrooms, porcini, dried
mustard
olive oil
onions: cipollini, yellow
orange
oregano
parsley
devon, polenta
potatoes
red pepper flakes
rosemary
rum, esp. dark
sage
savory
sherry
sour cream
sugar, brown
tarragon
turmeric
vinegar, balsamic
yogurt

Flavor Affinities
pork shoulder + bay leaves + wild mushrooms
pork shoulder + chipotle peppers + cumin + tomatoes
pork shoulder + plantains + rice + rum

PORTUGUESE CUISINE

PORK — SHOULDER (CONT)

apples
barbecue sauce
bay leaf
cayenne
chile peppers
cinnamon
coriander
cornmeal (e.g., grits, polenta)
couscous
cumin
five-spice powder
GARLIC
ginger
honey
lemon
lime
maple syrup
milk
mushrooms
orange
oregano
paprika
port
quince
rice
rum
sage
soy sauce
sugar, brown
thyme
tomatoes
vinegar
wine, red
beans, green
cardamom
cilantro
cinnamon
corn
fennel
ginger
lime
maple syrup
marjoram
mushrooms, porcini, dried
mustard
olive oil
onions: cipollini, yellow
orange
oregano
parsley
devon, polenta
potatoes
red pepper flakes
rosemary
rum, esp. dark
sage
savory
sherry
sour cream
sugar, brown
tarragon
turmeric
vinegar, balsamic
yogurt

Flavor Affinities
clams + garlic + paprika + pork
cod + eggs + onions + potatoes
garlic + kale + onions + potatoes
piri piri peppers + garlic + lemon
juice + olive oil + salt

POTATOES
Season: year-round
Function: cooling
Weight: medium–heavy
Volume: quiet
Techniques: bake, boil, deep-fry, gratin, grill, mash (use older, starchier potatoes), puree, roast, sauté, steam

arugula
bacon
basil
BAY LEAF
BEEF
bell peppers, green, esp. roasted
BUTTER, unsalted
buttermilk
caraway seeds
cardamom
carrots
cauliflower (e.g., Indian cuisine)
caviar
cayenne
celery
celery root
CHEESE: Brin d'Amour, Cantal, cheddar, Comté, Dry Jack.
Emmental, Fontina, goat, Gouda, Gruyère, manchego, Parmesan, pecorino, raclette, Roquefort, Torta del Casar

We make a potato stew with bacon, olives, mushrooms, and onions, which is perfect for cold winter Sunday suppers. We add two strong flavors — bacon and olives — to the potato. Onions and porcini mushrooms add another layer of flavor.

— MICHEL RICHARD, CITRONELLE (WASHINGTON, DC)

lamb
lavender
LEEKs
lemon, juice
lovage
marjoram
mayonnaise
morels
mushrooms, esp. wild
mussels
mustard: Dijon, dry
nutmeg
OIL: canola, peanut, vegetable
olive oil
olives, e.g., black
ONIONS: green, red, Spanish, Vidalia
oysters
paprika
parsley, flat-leaf
parsnips
peas
PEPPER: black, white

pork and pork belly
ramps
ROSEMARY
rutabagas
saffron
sage
salads
SALT: kosher, sea
salt cod
sausages: chorizo, Italian
savory
scallions
shallots
sorrel
sour cream
spinach (e.g., Indian cuisine)
squash, winter (e.g., butternut)
STEAK
STOCKS: chicken, vegetable
sweet potatoes
THYME
tomatoes
truffles, black
POULTRY (See Chicken, Turkey, etc.)

PROSCIUTTO
Taste: salty
Weight: light–medium
(depending on thinness of slicing)
Volume: moderate

almonds
apples
arugula
asparagus
basil
cheese: Fontina, Gruyère,
Parmesan, provolone
chestnuts
chicken
chicory
cilantro
fennel
FIGS
grapes
hazelnuts
honey
Italian cuisine
lemon, juice
lime, juice
*MELON, esp. cantaloupe,
honeydew
mushrooms
mustard, esp. Dijon
mustard seeds
nectarines
olive oil
pasta
pears
pepper: black, white
pine nuts
pomegranate molasses
sage
spinach
tomatoes
walnuts

PRUNES (See Plums, Dried)

PUMPKIN (See also Squashes, Winter)
Season: autumn
Taste: sweet
Weight: medium–heavy
Volume: moderate
Techniques: bake, braise, grill, puree, roast
allspice
amaretti cookie crumbs
apples
bay leaf
brandy, esp. apple
BUTTER, unsalted
caramel
carrots
cayenne
CHEESE: feta, Gruyère,
Parmesan
chile peppers
chocolate, white
cilantro
CINNAMON
CLOVES
coconut
cognac
cranberries
CREAM
cream cheese
crème anglaise
crème fraîche

Dishes
Prosciutto San Daniele with Black Pepper Fettunta and Figs
— Mario Batali, Babbo (New York City)

Fig and Prosciutto Pizza
— Todd English, Figs (Charlestown, Massachusetts)
**Dishes**

Pumpkin, Brown Sugar, and Tempura with Cinnamon Fragrance  
— Grant Achatz, Alinea (Chicago)

Pumpkin “Lune” with Butter, Sage, and Amaretti  
— Mario Batali, Babbo (New York City)

Creamy Pumpkin and Cream Cheese Custard with Orange-Rum Raisins  
— Gina DePalma, pastry chef, Babbo (New York City)

Grilled Pineapple and Caribbean Pumpkin Salad with Pumpkin Seeds and Cacao Nib Vinaigrette  
— Maricel Presilla, Zafra (Hoboken, New Jersey)

cumin  lime, juice  oil: sesame, vegetable
curry  lobster  duck  maple syrup  garlic

custard  mace  GINGER: fresh, ground  marjoram

duck  maple syrup  hazelnuts  mushrooms

garlic  mace  honey  NUTMEG

ginger  marjoram  Italian cuisine  nuts

cinnamon  molasses  kumquats  oatmeal

clove  mushrooms  leather  oil: sesame, vegetable

With pumpkin or even sweet potatoes, the combination of allspice, cinnamon, ginger, and clove works great. If you buy canned pumpkin that has spices already added, it tastes a little off and artificial. Depending on how you like your spices, you typically add equal amounts of ginger and cinnamon and less allspice and clove because the last two are very strong.  
— EMILY LUCHETTI, FARALLON (SAN FRANCISCO)

Pumpkin and butternut squash juices are great in dishes featuring [each respective vegetable]. What the juice does is intensify their flavor, making the dishes taste more natural.  
— ANDREW CARMELLINI, A VOCE (NEW YORK CITY)

I had to come up with a recipe for a vegan cookbook, and ended up making a pumpkin and coconut milk custard thickened with agar-agar that was so delicious, I put it on the menu!  
— BRADFORD THOMPSON, MARY ELAINE’S AT THE PHOENICIAN (SCOTTSDALE, ARIZONA)

Pumpkin and bay leaf together make the pumpkin taste even more pumpkin-like.  
— JERRY TRAUNFELD, THE HERBFARM (WOODINVILLE, WASHINGTON)

My pumpkin pie soup dish was inspired by walking through Whole Foods and seeing pumpkins. I thought, How do I like my pumpkin? I like pumpkin pie, and thought it would actually make an interesting soup. I made a pumpkin soup and found the soup to be very savory with its spicing, and added smoked duck to it. I wanted a contrasting flavor, so I added some sweet meringue as a garnish. Then I needed a contrast to the creaminess, so I put in a piece of pie crust a second before serving as well as toasted pecans for even more crunch.  
— BOB IACOVONE, CUVEE (NEW ORLEANS)
stews
stock, chicken
SUGAR: brown, white
sweet potatoes
Thanksgiving
thyme
turnips
vanilla
vinegar, balsamic
walnuts
wine, dry white
wine, sweet
yogurt

PUMPKIN SEED OIL
(See Oil, Pumpkin Seed)

PUMPKIN SEEDS
Season: autumn
Weight: light
Volume: quiet
Techniques: bake, roast

caramel
chile peppers, jalapeño
cilantro
coriander
cumin
Mexican cuisine
salt

PURSLANE
Season: summer
Taste: sour
Weight: light
Volume: moderate
Techniques: raw, sauté

beans, green
cucumber
garlic

Wild purslane has a lemony flavor and waxy leaves. It makes me think of a salad of very young green beans that are three inches long and tossed with the purslane and a splash of white wine vinegar and Ligurian olive oil.
— MICHAEL ANTHONY, GRAMERCY TAVERN (NEW YORK CITY)

Flavor Affinities
pumpkin + allspice + bay leaf + cinnamon + salt
pumpkin + allspice + cinnamon + ginger
pumpkin + amaretti cookie crumbs + butter + pasta + sage
pumpkin + apples + curry
pumpkin + brown sugar + pine nuts
pumpkin + butter + garlic + chicken stock + thyme
pumpkin + chile peppers + garlic
pumpkin + cream cheese + orange + rum
pumpkin + cream cheese + pumpkin seeds + sugar
pumpkin + custard + garlic
pumpkin + honey + balsamic vinegar
pumpkin + olive oil + rosemary

Dishes
Pepitas: Toasted Pumpkin Seeds Seasoned with Cumin, Coriander, and Jalapeño
— Traci Des Jardins, Mijita (San Francisco)

Cilantro and Pumpkin Seed Pesto
— Jerry Traunfeld, The Herbfarm (Woodinville, Washington)

herbs: chervil, cilantro, mint
olive oil
smoked trout
tomatoes
vinegar, white wine
yogurt

QUAIL
Season: late spring–autumn
Weight: light–medium
Volume: quiet–moderate
Techniques: braise, broil, grill, pan roast, roast, sauté

almonds
anchovies
anisette
apples
arugula
bacon

bay leaf
bell peppers, esp. red
bourbon
brandy
butter, unsalted
capers
cardamom
carrots
chard
chestnuts
chicken livers
chile peppers, esp. green
chili powder
cinnamon
clove
coconut
cognac
coriander
cream
cumin
currants
curries
dandelion greens
fennel
figs
foie gras
Quail is too delicate for rosemary, so I like it with a little lavender, pink peppercorns, and fleur de sel.
— SHARON HAGE, YORK STREET (DALLAS)

Flavor Affinities

**quail** + arugula + pomegranate
**quail** + bacon + Brussels sprouts
**quail** + bacon + garlic + lemon
**quail** + bourbon + molasses + pears
**quail** + chanterelle mushrooms + tarragon + tomato
**quail** + cinnamon + sumac
**quail** + figs + vinaigrette
**quail** + marjoram + olive oil + rosemary + sage + thyme

Dishes

Quail Corn Bread and Pecan Stuffed Breast, Leg Confit, Sweet Corn Pudding, and Chanterelle Mushrooms
— Jeffrey Buben, Vidalia (Washington, DC)

Glazed Quail with Caramelized Fennel Bulb and Tangerine Marmalade
— Thomas Keller, The French Laundry (Yountville, California)

Walnut-Glazed Quail with a Ragout of Organic Shell Beans, Shiitake Mushrooms, and Applewood-Smoked Bacon
— Gabriel Kreuther, The Modern (New York City)

Roast “Brace” of Quail and La Quercia “Americano” Prosciutto with a “Fondant” of Austrian Crescent Potatoes, Roasted Acorn Squash, Red Pearl Onions, Swiss Chard, and Tarragon
— Carrie Nahabedian, Naha (Chicago)

Two Texas Cross Quail and Braised Cabbage with Apple and Hazelnuts
— Monica Pope, T’afia (Houston)

Roasted Quail with Smoked Bacon, Brussels Sprouts, and a Quail Jus
— Thierry Rautureau, Rover’s (Seattle)

Pan-Fried Coriander Quail Cakes with Coconut Curried Vegetables
— Vikram Vij and Meeru Dhalwala, Vij’s (Vancouver)
Flavor Affinities
cloves (allspice or cinnamon) +
  ginger + nutmeg + black
  and/or white pepper

QUINCE
Season: autumn
Taste: sour
Weight: medium
Volume: moderate
Techniques: bake, poach, stew

almonds
*APPLES: fruit, juice
Armagnac
bay leaf
beef
brandy
butter, unsalted
Calvados
caramel
cardamom
CHEESE, ESP. GOAT,
  MANCHEGO, RICOTTA, and
  esp. with quince paste
cherries
chicken
cinnamon
cloves
cranberries
cream and ice cream
custards
dates
figs, esp. dried
fruits, dried, esp. apricots,
  cherries, plums
ginger
hazelnuts
honey
jams and jellies
kumquats
lamb
lemon, juice
liqueurs, nut
maple syrup
mascarpone
meats
nutmeg

Dishes
Roasted Quince, Foie Gras, and Candied Fennel with Sweet Spices
— Grant Achatz, Alinea (Chicago)

Quince and Marcona Almond “Crisp,” Mascarpone Sorbet, and Pedro Ximenez
Sherry Caramel
— Elizabeth Dahl, pastry chef, Naha (Chicago)

Quince-Filled Maple-Whiskey Cake with Goat Cheese Ice Cream
— Dominique and Cindy Duby, Wild Sweets (Vancouver)

Granny Smith Apple Sorbet, Quince, Quinoa, Pecans
— Johnny Iuzzini, pastry chef, Jean Georges (New York City)

Quince is something that will never be mainstream because of its
unique flavor and the fact that you just can’t peel it and eat it. But if you
peel quince and cook it forever and show it some love, it is so much
better than an apple or a pear.
— EMILY LUCHETTI, FARALLON (SAN FRANCISCO)

orange
*PEARS
pecans
pepper, black
pies (e.g., apple)
pistachios
poultry
raisins
raspberries
Spanish cuisine (quince paste)
star anise
sugar: brown, white
vanilla
walnuts
whiskey
wine: red, sweet
wine, white, e.g., Riesling
yogurt

RABBIT (See also Game —
In General)
Season: autumn–winter
Taste: sweet–astringent
Function: heating
Weight: medium
Volume: quiet–moderate
Techniques: barbecue, braise
  (esp. legs, thighs), broil, grill,
  roast, sauté, stew

almonds
apples
artichokes
arugula
asparagus, white
BACON, esp. smoked
barbecue sauce
basil
bay leaf
beans: fava, green, white
beer
bell peppers
brandy
bread crumbs
butter, unsalted
cabbage, esp. red
carrots
cayenne
celery root
cherries
chervil
chiles, esp. Thai
chives
chocolate, esp. dark
cider
cilantro
cinnamon
cloves
coconut milk
**Dishes**

**Rabbit Enchiladas with Red Chile Mole and Pumpkin Seeds**
— Robert Del Grande, at the 2003 James Beard Awards gala reception

**Braised Rabbit with Winter Vegetables, Abita Beer Bread, Truffled Parsnips**
— Bob Iacovone, Cuvée (New Orleans)

**Roast Loin of Rabbit with a “Ragoût” of Braised Rabbit, Confit Garlic Crushed Potatoes, Applewood Slab Bacon, “Hen of the Woods” Mushrooms, Glazed Young Carrots, and Turnips**
— Carrie Nahabedian, Naha (Chicago)

**Roasted Rabbit Saddle with Root Vegetables, Green Lentils, and a Game Jus**
— Thierry Rautureau, Rover’s (Seattle)

**Rabbit Braised in Arneis with Chickpea Crepe and Pancetta**
— Holly Smith, Café Juanita (Seattle)

**Rabbit Consommé, Morels, Pea, and Lavender Emulsion**
— Rick Tramonto, Tru (Chicago)

---

coriander
corn
cream
cumin
currants (e.g., currant jelly)
curry paste, Thai yellow
fennel leaves
fennel seeds
fish sauce, Thai
French cuisine
**GARLIC**
ginger
hazelnuts
Italian cuisine
leeks
lemon: juice, zest
lemongrass
lime: juice, leaves
Marsala
Mediterranean cuisine
mint
mirepoix
**mustards**
**OILS:** canola, grapeseed, hazelnut, peanut, vegetable, walnut
olive oil
olives, esp. green, black, kalamata

**ONIONS,** esp. pearl, Spanish, yellow
orange, zest
oregano
pancetta
paprika: smoked, sweet
**parsley, flat-leaf**
**pasta/noodles, egg**
**PEPPER:** black, pink, white
pine nuts
plums
port
potatoes

---

prunes
rice and risotto
rosemary
saffron
sage
salt: kosher, sea
sesame seeds
shallots
soy sauce
spinach
star anise

**STOCKS:** chicken, rabbit, veal
sugar (plOch)
salt: kosher, sea

**VINEGAR:** balsamic, cider, red
wine, sherry, white wine

**WINE:** dry red, dry white (e.g., Riesling), Champagne

**Flavor Affinities**
rabbit + bacon + rosemary
rabbit + garlic + potatoes + rosemary + shallots
rabbit + mushrooms + noodles
rabbit + mushrooms + tarragon
rabbit + mustard + red wine
rabbit + vinegar + red wine
rabbit + rosemary + tomato
rabbit + shallots + white beans

---

A dish I am really proud of is our saddle of rabbit served with green olives, shallots, marjoram, and fennel jam. This is a light and beautifully balanced dish that reminds me of Liguria [in Italy]. The olives are salty, the marjoram is strong, and the fennel is sweet. This has been on our menu for over a year but it took me a few tries to get right. I tried black olives, but they were too strong. I tried rosemary, but it was too earthy. I tried Brussels sprouts, but they were a little too bitter and didn’t complement the same way sweet fennel did. So though the combination didn’t work for the saddle, the black olives and rosemary led me to add some rabbit liver and stuff a whole boned rabbit. That dish did work. The two dishes were different in the sense that the saddle with the green olives was a little more sophisticated while the whole rabbit was more of a peasant dish. Customers like both!

— **ODETTE FADA,** SAN DOMENICO (NEW YORK CITY)
**Radicchio**

*Season:* year-round  
*Taste:* bitter  
*Weight:* medium-heavy  
*Volume:* moderate-loud  
*Techniques:* braise, grill, roast, sear

- anchovies  
- apples  
- arugula  
- bacon  
- beans, esp. shell, white  
- beef  
- butter  
- capers  
- CHEESE, esp. pungent and/or  
  - Asiago, blue, dry Jack, feta,  
  - Gorgonzola, Gruyère,  
  - PARMESAN  
- chicken, esp. roasted  
- chives  
- duck  
- eggs, esp. hard-boiled  
- endive  
- fennel  
- figs  
- fish  
- garlic  
- horseradish  
- ITALIAN CUISINE  
  - lamb  
- lemon: juice, zest  
- lime, juice  
- lobster  
- mushrooms, wild  
- mustard, Dijon  
- oil, corn  
- OLIVE OIL  
- onions, red  
- orange: juice, zest  
- pancetta  
- parsley, flat-leaf  
- pasta  
- pears  
- pecans  
- pepper: black, white

- pine nuts  
- pizza  
- pork  
- poultry  
- prosciutto  
- pumpkin and pumpkin oil  
- red pepper flakes  
- risotto  
- rosemary  
- salads and salad dressings  
- salami  
- SALT  
- seafood, esp. grilled or roasted  
- shallots  
- shrimp  
- squab  
- VINEGAR: BALSAMIC, red  
  - wine, sherry  
- walnuts  
- wine, dry white

**Flavor Affinities**

- radicchio + arugula + endive  
- radicchio + Asiago cheese + olive oil + balsamic vinegar  
- radicchio + duck + risotto + reduced balsamic vinegar  
- radicchio + fennel + prosciutto  
- radicchio + Gorgonzola cheese + pears  
- radicchio + hard-boiled eggs + olive oil + prosciutto + sherry vinegar + walnuts  
- radicchio + mushrooms + risotto + balsamic vinegar

It’s vital that you taste your ingredients to determine the best way to serve them. We got a new radicchio in that is so bitter it just won’t work as a salad. Instead, we will turn it into a pesto or a tiny garnish.

— MONICA POPE, T'AFIA (HOUSTON)

**Dishes**

- Grilled Radicchio Trevisano with Asiago and Horseradish  
  — Mario Batali, Babbo (New York City)

- Radicchio Salad with Parmesan Balsamic Vinaigrette  
  — Hiro Sone and Lissa Doumani, Terra (St. Helena, California)
There is a time of year when all there seems to be in the green market is radishes. You get sick of seeing them and they are there for months. So, I needed to create something new and all there was were radishes. So, I came up with a radish salad served with lobster. We blanch turnip rounds and fold in a little baby ginger to get this wonderfully peppery salad. The sauce with the lobster is a pistachio vinaigrette that is bound by onion puree and brightened by the juice that pickled the ginger. We finish the dish with toasted pistachios and add a pistachio oil. The pistachio nut and oil add an earthy quality and depth of flavor to the dish.

— MICHAEL ANTHONY, GRAMERCY TAVERN (NEW YORK CITY)

cream cheese

RAISINS
Taste: sweet
Weight: medium
Volume: moderate
Techniques: bake, raw, stew

cinnamon
cloves
cognac
crème fraîche
currants
custard
dates
desserts
figs, dried
ginger
hazelnuts
honey
ice cream
Indian cuisine
Italian cuisine, esp. Venetian
lemon: juice, zest
liqueurs, nut
maple syrup
mascarpone
mole sauces
Moroccan cuisine
nutmeg
nuts
oatmeal
orange: juice, zest
peanuts
pears
pecans
pine nuts
pistachios

Flavor Affinities
radishes + bread + butter + salt
prunes
pumpkin
quince
raisins
rice (e.g., pudding)
RUM
salads
sour cream
Southern Comfort
stuffings
sugar: brown, white
sweet potatoes
vanilla
walnuts
whiskey
wine: red, sweet, white
yogurt

Flavor Affinities
raisins + orange + rum

RAMS (aka wild leeks; see also Leeks, Onions, and Scallions)
Season: spring-summer
Weight: light
Volume: quiet–moderate
Techniques: cook, raw

asparagus
bacon
butter
carrots
cheese, Parmesan
chicken
chives
cream
cured meats (e.g., speck)
fish (e.g., halibut, salmon, trout)
ham
lentils, green
mushrooms, wild (e.g., morels)

olive oil
onions
pasta
pepper, black
pork
potatoes, esp. new
prosciutto
risotto
shallots
stock, chicken
wine, white

Flavor Affinities
ramps + asparagus + morels
ramps + lentils + pork
ramps + Parmesan cheese + risotto
ramps + pasta + speck

RASPBERRIES
Season: summer
Taste: sweet
Weight: light
Volume: quiet–moderate

almonds
apricots
beverages
blackberries
blueberries
brandy, esp. berry-flavored
buttermilk
caramel
Champagne
cheese: goat, ricotta
CHOCOLATE, ESP. DARK (say some)
*CHOCOLATE, WHITE
cinnamon
cloves

Kirsch
LEMON: juice, zest
lime: juice, zest
liqueurs, esp. berry, nut
macadamia nuts
mangoes
maple syrup
mascarpone
melon
meringue
milk, sweetened condensed
mint (garnish)
nectarines
oatmeal
orange: juice, zest
peaches
peanuts
pears
pecans
pineapple
pine nuts
pistachios
plums
quince
raspberry preserves
rum, dark
salads: fruit, green

Dishes
Spaghetti with Local Ramps, American Speck, and Parmesan
— Andrew Carmellini, A Voce (New York City)

Roasted Pork Chop with Spiced Pulled Pork, Green Lentils, and Ramps
— Gray Kunz, Café Gray (New York City)
When working with raspberries, I will try not to cook them too much. The problem is that often fresh raspberries are not that great. If I am making a sauce, even in the middle of summer I will use frozen raspberries. You can use frozen fruit as long as it doesn't have sugar or anything else added. The fruit is picked in the field when it is ripe and frozen right away. So, the frozen raspberries will have better flavor than those that have been put in a little carton and shipped across the country. Of course, local farmers’ market raspberries are a different story. If I am making a sauce in the summer, the frozen raspberries will taste great. On the other hand, you would not use frozen raspberries on top of a tart.

— EMILY LUCHETTI, FARALLON (SAN FRANCISCO)
**Flavor Affinities**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Combination</th>
<th>Pairs</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>rhubarb + blood orange + caramelized sugar</td>
<td>rhubarb + blood orange + caramelized sugar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>rhubarb + caramel + orange</td>
<td>rhubarb + caramel + orange</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>rhubarb + cardamom + orange</td>
<td>rhubarb + cardamom + orange</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>rhubarb + cardamom + sugar + vanilla</td>
<td>rhubarb + cardamom + sugar + vanilla</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>rhubarb + cinnamon + cream + walnuts</td>
<td>rhubarb + cinnamon + cream + walnuts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>rhubarb + cream cheese + lime + vanilla</td>
<td>rhubarb + cream cheese + lime + vanilla</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>rhubarb + fennel + mascarpone</td>
<td>rhubarb + fennel + mascarpone</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>rhubarb + honey + lemon + vanilla</td>
<td>rhubarb + honey + lemon + vanilla</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>rhubarb + lemon + yogurt</td>
<td>rhubarb + lemon + yogurt</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>rhubarb + mint + orange</td>
<td>rhubarb + mint + orange</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>rhubarb + mint + sugar + vanilla</td>
<td>rhubarb + mint + sugar + vanilla</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>rhubarb + Stilton cheese + port wine</td>
<td>rhubarb + Stilton cheese + port wine</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>rhubarb + strawberry + vanilla</td>
<td>rhubarb + strawberry + vanilla</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**RICE, WHITE — IN GENERAL**

- **Function:** cooling
- **Weight:** light–medium
- **Volume:** quiet
- **Techniques:** boil, steam

- anise
- bacon
- beans
- **butter, unsalted**
- chicken
- cinnamon
- coconut and coconut milk
- cream / milk
- curry powder
- fish
- fish sauce, Thai
- garlic
- ginger, fresh
- lemon, zest
- meats
- nuts: almonds, pecans, pistachios, walnuts
- onions
- peas
- raisins
- rhubarb
- **SAFFRON**
- salt
- shellfish

---

I like to pair **rhubarb**, caramelized sugar, and blood orange juice — which has more character than orange juice — because their seasons barely overlap. I am not a fan of rhubarb desserts because they always tend to be one note — either very tart, or very sweet to make up for the tartness. Caramel works well with rhubarb because it makes the rhubarb not too sweet.

— **MICHAEL LAISKONIS, LE BERNARDIN (NEW YORK CITY)**

There is not a lot of fruit available in the spring, so that pretty much leaves you with **rhubarb**. The good news is that rhubarb works well in custards and ice creams.

— **JERRY TRAUNFELD, THE HERBFARM (WOODINVILLE, WASHINGTON)**

**VANILLA**

- verbena
- vinaigrette
- vinegar: cider, raspberry
- wild rice
- wine, sweet white (e.g., Riesling)
- yogurt

---

**Dishes**

- Cool Rhubarb Soup with Orange and Mint Fior Di Latte
  — Gina DePalma, pastry chef, Babbo (New York City)

- Ricotta Cheesecake with Rhubarb and Sweet Vanilla Cream
  — Gina DePalma, pastry chef, Babbo (New York City)

- Rhubarb Stilton and Port Wine Reduction Chocolate
  — Dominique and Cindy Duby, Wild Sweets (Vancouver)

- Rhubarb Consommé, Vanilla-Poached Rhubarb, Strawberry Crisp
  — Gale Gand, pastry chef, Tru (Chicago)

- Vanilla Yogurt Mousse, Rhubarb-Citrus Compote, Blood Orange Sorbet, and Coulis
  — Michael Laiskonis, pastry chef, Le Bernardin (New York City)

- Warm Apple and Rhubarb Turnovers with Rhubarb-Gewürztraminer Jam and Candied Ginger-Crème Fraîche Ice Cream
  — Emily Luchetti, pastry chef, Farallon (San Francisco)

- Rhubarb Napoleon with Mascarpone Cream and Fennel Compote
  — Ellie Nelson, pastry chef, Jardinière (San Francisco)

- Old-Fashioned Rhubarb Crisp with Cinnamon-Walnut Ice Cream
  — Michael Romano, Union Square Café (New York City)

- Rhubarb and Angelica Pie
  — Jerry Traunfeld, The Herbfarm (Woodinville, Washington)

- Rhubarb-Mint Cobbler
  — Jerry Traunfeld, The Herbfarm (Woodinville, Washington)
shrimp
stocks: chicken, vegetable
sugar
tomatoes
vegetables

RICE, ARBORIO OR CARNAROLI (aka risotto)

Weight: medium-heavy
Volume: quiet
Techniques: sauté, then simmer

- arugula
- asparagus
- bacon
- basil
- butter, unsalted
- celery
- cheese, Parmesan
- chicken
- chile peppers, red
- chives
- crab
- fennel
- garlic
- Italian cuisine
- lemon
- lemon thyme
- lime, zest
- mushrooms (e.g., chanterelles, morels, shiitake)
- mussels
- mustard seeds
- onions
- parsley, flat-leaf
- peas
- pepper, black
- prosciutto
- saffron
- scallions
- shallots
- shellfish
- shrimp
- sorrel
- squid
- stocks: chicken, fish, tarragon, thyme, tomatoes, truffles, veal, vermouth
- wine: dry red or white
- zucchini blossoms
**Flavor Affinities**

risotto + artichokes + lemon + prosciutto
risotto + asparagus + chervil + morel mushrooms
risotto + asparagus + saffron + scallops
risotto + bacon + butternut squash + maple syrup + sage
risotto + chanterelle mushrooms + zucchini blossoms
risotto + chorizo + clams + saffron
risotto + corn + Parmesan cheese + scallions
risotto + corn + Parmesan cheese + shrimp
risotto + mussels + parsley + peas
risotto + pancetta + Parmesan cheese + pumpkin
risotto + peas + prosciutto
risotto + sweet onions + Parmesan cheese
risotto + veal + black truffles

---

**RICE, BASMATI**

**Function:** cooling  
**Weight:** light  
**Volume:** quiet–moderate  
**Techniques:** boil, simmer

- almonds
- basil
- bay leaves
- bell peppers
- butter
- buttermilk
- cardamom
- chicken
- chile peppers, esp. dried red
- cinnamon
- coconut
- coriander
- cream / milk
- cumin
- currants
- curry leaves
- fennel seeds
- garam masala
- garlic
- ginger
- Indian cuisine
- lamb
- lemon
- lime, juice
- milk
- mint
- nuts
- oil: canola, macadamia
- onions, esp. green, red
- orange
- peas
- pepper: black, white
- pistachios
- potatoes
- raisins, yellow
- saffron
- salt, kosher
- spinach
- sugar
- thyme
- tomatoes and tomato paste

---

**Odette Fada of New York's San Domenico on Risotto**

I am from Northern Italy and grew up eating risotto. Back then, we mainly ate risotto Milanese [i.e., saffron risotto, traditionally served with osso buco or with a mild pork sausage crumbled in with some rosemary]. We would also put it in soup — or even just eat it simply with some grated cheese.

I love it because it only takes one pan, and it is ready in 20 minutes! People think it takes a long time but if you were to cook a piece of fish, wash greens, and make a salad dressing, that would take just as long.

You can make risotto with almost anything. I love it with fruit, vegetables, or fish. One of my favorite fruit risottos is a seasonal one with pears and Gorgonzola. The pears give a nice, sweet crunch to the dish. I also like making risotto with Prosecco, strawberries, and nettles.

A classic combination in Italy in fall is game with blueberry jam and mushrooms. I have adapted this and for over twenty years have been serving risotto with porcini mushrooms and blueberries tossed in at the last second.

I also like to make a risotto with fresh herbs like rosemary, thyme, or oregano — and then at the end I'll cover it with an extra-thin slice of lard [pork jowl] that has a mild flavor. It just melts into the risotto and is out of this world.

Each ingredient you add to your risotto will dictate when it should be added. If it is something delicate like a berry, it gets added very late so it will not break up. If you are making a seafood risotto — say, with octopus — it should be added early so it has time to cook all the way through.

---

**RICE, CARNAROLI**  
(See Rice, Arborio)

**RICE, JASMINE**  
(See Thai Cuisine)

**RICE, WILD**

**Weight:** medium  
**Volume:** moderate  
**Techniques:** simmer

- butter, unsalted
- celery
- game
- game birds
- lemon, zest
- Midwestern American cuisine
- oil: hazelnut, vegetable, walnut
olive oil
onions
pepper, ground
pine nuts
salt
sausage, smoked
scallions
stock, chicken	
tarragon
walnuts
wine, dry white

**RIESLING**

*Weight:* light  
*Volume:* quiet–moderate

apples
cheese, esp. blue, soft, triple crème
chicken
curries, esp. milder
duck
fish
fruit, esp. summer
ham, esp. baked
pork
salads
salmon
salmon, smoked
scallops
seafood
shellfish
tROUT, esp. sautéed

---

**Dishes**

*Rose and Almond Panna Cotta*
— Gina DePalma, pastry chef, Babbo (New York City)

*Tropical Fruit Salad with Rosewater and Sweet Tahini Yogurt*
— Brad Farmerie, Public (New York City)

Floral flavors, when done well, can be really amazing. This is also special because it is something that I never grew up with. Someone from India may not find it a big deal.

I tend to think in threes. I’ll pair two classic ingredients, and add a third to elevate the combination. I make my own rose-flavored dessert that was inspired by [French pastry chef] Pierre Hermé and his rose macaroon with raspberry and lychee, which is one of the greatest things I have tasted in my life. I coat a standard tart shell with a layer of liquid raspberry, on top of that I place a rose parfait, which I pair with lemon and pistachio. To make the rose flavor not so overbearing, I use it in three different forms. I infuse rosebuds [used to make rosewater] in the milk for the parfait, and I also use rose syrup, which adds color and sweetness, and finally rosewater as well. You have to be careful with rose because it can be like eating perfume. That is why I take a lot of care using three layers to make it one flavor.

— **MICHAEL LAISKONIS, LE BERNARDIN (NEW YORK CITY)**

**ROASTED DISHES**

*artichokes, Jerusalem beef*  
*beets*  
*carrots*  
*celery root*  
*chicken*  
*fennel*  
*ham*  
*lamb*  
*onions*  
*parsnips*  
*pork*  
*potatoes*  
*rutabagas*  
*shallots*  
*squash, winter (e.g., butternut)*  
*turkey*  
*turnips*  
*veal: loin, rib*  
*vegetables, root*  
*venison*  
*yams*  

**ROSE** *(Hips, Petals, Water)*

*Taste:* sweet  
*Weight:* light  
*Volume:* moderate–loud

almonds
baked goods (e.g., cakes)
cream / milk
desserts
fruit
honey
ice cream
Indian cuisine desserts
lemon
lychee
pistachios
raspberries
rice and rice pudding
vanilla
yogurt
Flavor Affinities
rose + almonds + cream/milk
rose + honey + yogurt
rose + lemon + pistachios
rose + lychee + raspberries

ROSEMARY
Season: year-round
Taste: pungent
Weight: heavy, tough-leaved
Volume: loud
Tips: Add early in the cooking process.
In winter, rosemary is milder; in summer, it is stronger.

anchovies
apples
apricots
asparagus
bacon
baked goods (e.g., breads, cakes, cookies)
bay leaf
BEANS, esp. dried, fava, white, green
beef
bell peppers
bouquet garni (key ingredient)
braised dishes
breads
Brussels sprouts
butter
cabbage
carrots
cauliflower
celery
chicken, esp. grilled
chives
cream
cream cheese
duck
eggs and egg dishes
eggplant
fennel
figs
FISH, esp. grilled
focaccia
French cuisine, esp. Provençal fruit
game: rabbit, venison
*GARLIC
gin
grains
grapefruit: juice, zest
grapes
grilled dishes, esp. meats, vegetables
herbes de Provence (key ingredient)
honey
Italian cuisine
*LAMB
lavender
lemon: juice, zest
lemon verbena
lentils
lime: juice, zest
liver
lovage
mackerel
marinades
marjoram
MEATS, esp. grilled, roasted
Mediterranean cuisine
milk
mint
mushrooms
mussels
octopus
OLIVE OIL
ONIONS
orange: juice
oregano
parsley
parsnips
pasta
pears
peas
pepper, black
pizza
polenta
PORK
POTATOES
poultry
radicchio
rice
risotto
roasted meats
sage
salmon
sardines
sauces
savory
scallops, esp. grilled

Rosemary has a strong flavor, so it’s always going to be the star. It works with strong, assertive fish like swordfish or tuna — and, of course, it is a classic with lamb.
— DAVID WALTUCK, CHANTERELLE (NEW YORK CITY)

Rosemary works with apples or pears.
— JERRY TRAUNFELD, THE HERBFARM (WOODINVILLE, WASHINGTON)

When I think of rosemary, I think of octopus. It works so well in a ceviche with octopus, black olives, and potato.
— KATSUYA FUKUSHIMA, MINIBAR (WASHINGTON, DC)

Rosemary can be strong with seafood unless it is a full-flavored seafood. We will skewer mussels with rosemary and pan fry them because they work with the piney flavor of the mussels.
— JERRY TRAUNFELD, THE HERBFARM (WOODINVILLE, WASHINGTON)

Rosemary works well with citrus and honey.
— GINA DEPALMA, BABBO (NEW YORK CITY)
shellfish
sherry
shrimp
soups
spinach
squash: summer, winter
steaks
stews
strawberries
strongly flavored foods
sweet potatoes
swordfish
thyme
TOMATOES, tomato juice, tomato sauce
tuna
veal
vegetables, esp. grilled, roasted vinegar, balsamic
wine
zucchini (say some)

AVOID
corn
Middle Eastern cuisine
salads
zucchini (say some)

Flavor Affinities
rosemary + anchovies + garlic
rosemary + butter + lemon
rosemary + garlic + lamb
rosemary + garlic + lemon
rosemary + garlic + wine
rosemary + onions + potatoes
rosemary + Parmesan cheese + polenta
rosemary + pork + sherry

RUM
Weight: light–heavy (light to dark rum)
Volume: moderate–loud

apples: fruit, juice
bananas: fruit, liqueur
butter
butterscotch

The Martinique rums tend to be drier, while Haitian rums tend to be spicier. I use more spices with rum in general, and herbs with spirits such as gin.
— JERRI BANKS, COCKTAIL CONSULTANT (NEW YORK CITY)

I love the combination of rum with carrots. Carrot juice provides a bright color that sends a message, especially to women. It has its own natural sweetness, and a little goes a long way. Carrots go beautifully with lemon thyme and orange, but I especially love the combination of carrots and ginger. In the autumn months, I’ll combine gold rum with carrot and apple juices and autumn spices. I’ll infuse allspice, cinnamon, and nutmeg into a tea or tisane, and add that to the cocktail.
— JERRI BANKS, COCKTAIL CONSULTANT (NEW YORK CITY)

Caribbean cuisine
carrot: juice
chestnuts
chocolate
cinnamon
Coca-Cola
coconut: fruit, milk, water
cream and ice cream
fruit juice
ginger
grapefruit
grenadine
LEMON: JUICE
LIME: JUICE
maple syrup
mara schino liqueur
mint
nutmeg
nuts
ORANGE: JUICE
passion fruit
pineapple
pumpkin
punch (key ingredient)
raisins
SPICES: allspice, cinnamon, nutmeg, star anise
SUGAR, ESP. BROWN
tropical fruits
vanilla
vermouth: dry, sweet

Flavor Affinities
rum + apples + butter + nuts + vanilla
rum + apples + carrot juice + spices
rum + apples + cinnamon + pumpkin
rum + coconut water + tropical fruits
rum + lime + banana + sugar
rum + lime + mint + sugar
rum + lime + pineapple + sugar

RUSSIAN CUISINE
beets
cabbage
caraway seeds
caviar
cilantro
cinnamon
cloves
cumin
dill
fish: pickled, smoked
fruits and fruit sauces
garlic
ginger
herring
lamb, grilled
meats, skewered and grilled
mint
mushrooms
nutmeg
onions
paprika
parsley, black pepper, poppy seeds, potatoes, saffron, sausages, sour cream, tarragon, vinegar, vodka, yogurt

Flavor Affinities
mushrooms + cloves + pepper + vinegar

RUTABAGAS
Season: autumn-spring
Taste: sweet
Weight: medium-heavy
Volume: moderate-loud
Techniques: boil, braise, deep-fry, puree, roast, steam

allspice, apples, basil, bay leaf, beets, broccoli, butter, clarified, caraway seeds, cardamom, carrots, cayenne, celery, celery root, cheese: blue, Gruyère, Parmesan, chives, cinnamon, cream, cream cheese, cumin, dill, duck, garlic, esp. roasted, ginger, greens, bitter, honey, lamb, leeks, lemon, juice, mace, maple syrup, marjoram, mustard, nutmeg, olive oil, onions, orange, zest, oregano, parsley, parsnips, pears, pepper: black, white, pork, potatoes, rabbit, raisins, rosemary, saffron, sage, salt, savory, scallions, soups, squash, butternut, star anise, stock, chicken, sweet potatoes, tarragon, thyme, tomatoes, tuna, turnips, vanilla, vinaigrette / vinegar, watercress

Flavor Affinities
rutabagas + apples + maple syrup
rutabagas + cheese + potatoes
rutabagas + potatoes + rosemary

SAFFRON
Taste: sour–sweet–bitter
Function: cooling
Weight: very light
Volume: very loud
Tips: Add later in the cooking process; saffron is activated by the heat of cooking.
This bright yellow/orange-hued spice is used for its color as well as its flavor.
A little saffron goes a very long way — never add more than necessary.
anise, artichokes, asparagus, basil, beef
BOUILLABAISSE
breads, cardamom, carrots, cheese, chicken, cinnamon, citrus, cloves, coriander, corn, couscous, cream and ice cream, cumin, curries, custards

Dishes
Apple-Rutabaga Soup
— Patrick O’Connell, The Inn at Little Washington (Washington, Virginia)
I would definitely have saffron on hand for Spanish cooking. It lends itself to rice, seafood, meat, and poultry. You can combine saffron and salt together for a saffron salt that is incredibly aromatic. Saffron also works very well on a salad. People forget that saffron is a flower and, sprinkled on a salad, it aromatizes the greens.

— JOSÉ ANDRÉS, CAFÉ ATLÁNTICO (WASHINGTON, DC)

Saffron has a sweet power. It is a classic flavor to add to shellfish, but the minute you taste the saffron in a dish, there is too much.

— MICHEL RICHARD, CITRONELLE (WASHINGTON, DC)

I wanted to come up with a panna cotta that was unlike anyone else’s. I was walking down the street thinking of Italian dishes and risotto Milanese [which is made with saffron] came to mind. This led me to think about saffron, and the idea of adding saffron to my panna cotta. After Ruth Reichl mentioned it in the New York Times review of Babbo, Mario [Batali] told me I could never take it off the menu!

Saffron has a bright metallic flavor, and with quince — which is floral, delicate, and perfumed — it is wonderful. Over the years, I have found that saffron unexpectedly changes its flavor depending on what fruit is paired with it. Each fruit I work with either turns up its floral component or its metallic flavor. Saffron is great with stone fruits like apples, peaches, pears, plums, and figs. It also works with citrus like blood oranges, kumquats, and grapefruit. On the other hand, it doesn’t work with many berries. It makes strawberries a little flat, and is downright awful with cranberries.

— GINA DEPALMA, BABBO (NEW YORK CITY)
Sage has a much better flavor when it is cooked first. We will cook it in butter, olive oil, or bacon fat.
— JERRY TRAUNFELD, THE HERBFARM (WOODINVILLE, WASHINGTON)

CHICKEN, esp. roasted
chickpeas
citrus
corn
cream
cream cheese
duck
eggplant
Eggs
European cuisine
fattier foods, esp. meats
fennel
fish, esp. oilier
French cuisine
game
game birds
garlic
ginger, dried
goose
Greek cuisine
honey
Italian cuisine
lamb
lemon
lemon herbs (balm, thyme, verbena)
liver
lovage
marjoram
meats, fattier, richer, and/or
roasted
Mediterranean cuisine
mint
mushrooms
offal
olive oil
ONIONS
orange
oregano
oysters (e.g., stuffing)
pancetta
paprika
parsley, flat-leaf
PASTA, esp. gnocchi, ravioli
pears
peas
pepper, black
*PORK
potatoes
poultry
prosciutto
pumpkin
rice
rich dishes
rosemary
salads: pasta, potato
sausages
savory
shellfish
shrimp
skate
slow-cooked dishes
Soups, esp. legumes
Spanish cuisine
squash, winter
steak
stews
stocks
STUFFING
swordfish
thyme
tomatoes
tuna
turkey
veal
vegetables, esp. root
walnuts
wine, esp. white

Flavor Affinities
sage + marjoram + thyme
sage + parsley + rosemary + thyme
sage + pasta + walnuts
sage + stuffing + turkey + walnuts

SAKE
Weight: light
Volume: quiet
cucumber
fish
gin
JAPANESE CUISINE
lemon juice
lime juice
salads
sashimi and sushi
shellfish
sugar (simple syrup)
vodka

Flavor Affinities
sake + cucumber + lime

SALADS (See also Lettuces and other vegetables)

Every salad should have elements of bitter, salt, heat, and texture. For us, the bitter component is often the greens. We use a lot of frisée, radicchio, and endive. But there always needs to be some crunch in a salad. Even if it is a delicate salad, you need to find a way to get a crunch in there. For a delicate salad, you can get crunch using fried shallot rings or crispy sage leaves. We often use nuts for crunch. Our leaf salad has a cashew brittle, which is made by caramelizing sugar then seasoning it with salt, black pepper, a hint of madras curry, a pinch of our Moroccan spice blend (eighteen ingredients), and a pinch of pepper mix (four ingredients) before tossing the nuts in. The other components of the salad are pomegranate seeds, bacon, and a South American blue cheese.
— SHARON HAGE, YORK STREET (DALLAS)
When you are eating a salad, the greens are the main ingredient, so whatever you add has to elevate them. Lettuce is boring by itself, so you elevate it with the vinaigrette. We will use herbs in our salads, but they must not overpower the greens; they have to be very subtle and used in small amounts. We will use chives or fresh parsley leaves or a combination of the two. We may also add some mint to the mix because it pushes the flavors of the greens.

— ERIC RIPERT, LE BERNARDIN (NEW YORK CITY)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SALMON (See also Fish — In General)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Season:</strong> spring–early autumn</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Weight:</strong> medium</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Volume:</strong> moderate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Techniques:</strong> bake, braise, broil, grill, marinate, panfry, poach, raw (e.g., sashimi, tartare), roast, sauté, sear, steam</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

anchovies
apples, esp. Golden Delicious or Granny Smith, and apple cider
artichoke hearts
arugula
asparagus (accompaniment)
bacon
barbecue sauce
basil: leaf, oil
bass
bay leaf
beans: fava, flageolets, white
beets
beurre blanc
bread crumbs: regular, panko
Brussels sprouts
**BUTTER,** unsalted
cabbage, esp. green, savoy
capers
cardamom
**carrots**
caviar
cayenne
celery
Champagne
chervil
chile peppers: dried, fresh, green, jalapeño, red, Thai

The **salmon** is roasted, and served with warm, slightly charred cucumbers, which I like because they are rarely used cooked. We use market vegetables that right now are bok choy and peas. I have added some trout caviar for a briny flavor because salmon is on the sweet side. The dish is then finished with a hickory broth.

For the hickory broth, we smoke some hickory chips, wrap them in cheesecloth with juniper berries and peppercorns, and then submerge them in water to make a broth. This creates a smoked sauce that is light and tasty. What we have here is a "wood stock" that makes perfect sense with the salmon because so often salmon is smoked. After the wood comes out, you taste the broth to adjust it. It may need some more water to cut the wood and smoke flavor, or it might need to be reduced to intensify it. We finish the sauce with a little half-and-half, and foam it with a handheld mixer.
Vitaly Paley of Portland's Paley's Place on Cooking Salmon on a Plank

Salmon is a big part of cooking in the Northwest. We get ours anywhere from Oregon up to Alaska.

The first cooking process that comes to mind in this part of the country is called cedar planking, which is a Native American technique. You see planking in all the best cooking catalogs, but the problem is that you cook the fish, throw it out, and keep the plank because the plank is inevitably more expensive than the fish! So here is one tip: Instead, do what we do and go to a lumber yard and pick up untreated cedar shingles. They come in a huge bundle for $16.

To get the most out of plank cooking, the salmon needs to be brined or marinated. I have two favorite marinades—one that is wet, and one that is dry. The wet marinade is a 60/40 mixture of soy sauce and cream sherry, lots of sliced ginger, heads of garlic cut in half, and chopped scallions. The sherry adds just a touch of sweetness to the fish, which I like. Let the fish sit in that marinade for a couple of hours and then it is ready to take on the smoke.

The dry marinade is a more traditional marinade of a 60/40 ratio of brown sugar and salt with orange zest [grated] on a microplane [fine grater]. I mix this all together and lavishly rub it over a salmon with the skin on, which protects it from getting too salty or sweet. The sugar in this rub balances out the salt and adds another dimension to the fish with caramelization happening a lot quicker. The sweetness is almost hidden. It is that "What's-that-flavor?" aspect to the fish. Marinate for a couple of hours, then wipe off the rub slightly, and it is ready to go. The 60/40 ratio of sugar to salt is good because it is pretty forgiving if you leave the fish in the marinade a half hour too long.

I recommend brushing the plank lightly with some olive oil, throwing it on a hot grill, putting the fish on, and letting it catch on fire, because when the plank is on fire, that is the flavor you are looking for. When the burning plank gets close to the fish, cover the grill to smother the fire and let the smoke do the rest of the work.

Salmon has been my favorite fish since I learned to cook it correctly. It is so versatile: you can smoke it, marinate it, or even serve it raw. Because it is rich and fatty, it pairs well with everything from a red wine sauce to a simple vinaigrette.

— MICHEL RICHARD, CITRONELLE (WASHINGTON, DC)

Tomato and pineapple with salmon: This dish goes back to 1975 when someone gave me a salad of tomato and pineapple. I didn't know what to do with it, so I stored the idea away. Today, I will cook the tomato, pineapple, a dash of white wine for acid, miso, and the salmon head, which bridges and brings the flavors together. Tomato gets fruitier when cooked with pineapple. The end result doesn't taste like either tomato or pineapple; it is a new flavor. This sauce is perfect with salmon.

— MICHEL RICHARD, CITRONELLE (WASHINGTON, DC)

Dishes
Salmon Gravlax with Chickpea Pancake, Caviar, and Mustard

— Tom Valenti, Ouest (New York City)
Dishes
Seared Salmon with Potatoes, Leeks, and Mustard-Chive Sauce
— Lidia Bastianich, Felidia (New York City)

Pistachio-Crusted Salmon Medallions with Garlic Mashed Potatoes, Crispy Fennel, Arugula, Olives, Roasted Peppers, and Savory Tomato Butter
— Bob Kinkead, Kinkead’s (Washington, DC)

Wild Salmon with Horseradish Crust, Cabbage, and Riesling
— Gabriel Kreuther, The Modern (New York City)

House-Made Gravlax with Scrambled Eggs, Pumpernickel, Herb Crème Fraîche, and Red Onions
— Tony Liu, August (New York City)

Salmon Rubbed with Ground Red Chile and Lime and Pan Seared. Served with a Tangy, Spicy Tomatillo, Jalapeño, and Lime Juice Sauce
— Zarela Martinez, Zarela (New York City)

Wild Alaskan Troll Red King Salmon, Yukon Potato Gnocchi, Braised Artichokes and Leeks, Enriched Chicken Jus with Chives and Chervil
— Carrie Nahabedian, Naha (Chicago)

Signature Sushi: Salmon with Mango Puree; Seared Salmon Belly with Lemon Soy
— Kaz Okochi, Kaz Sushi Bistro (Washington, DC)

Pistachio-Crusted Salmon with Curried Spinach Salad, Mandarin Orange Vinaigrette
— Monica Pope, T’afia (Houston)

Salmon with Grilled Vegetables, Baby Artichokes, Israeli Couscous, Warm Vegetable Vinaigrette
— Alfred Portale, Gotham Bar and Grill (New York City)

Wild Salmon: Barely Cooked Wild Alaskan Salmon; Morels and Spring Vegetables in a Wild Mushroom Pot au Feu
— Eric Ripert, Le Bernardin (New York City)

Slow-Roasted Scottish Salmon, Caramelized Fennel, Red Wine–Fennel Emulsion
— Rick Tramonto, Tru (Chicago)

Darjeeling Tea–Cured Salmon with English Cucumber and Crème Fraîche
— Charlie Trotter, Trotter’s to Go (Chicago)

Roasted Salmon with Sweet Corn Flan, Chanterelles, Prosciutto, Zucchini, Corn-Chive Butter, and Shrimp Oil
— Tom Valenti, Ouest (New York City)

mushrooms, esp. black trumpet, button, chanterelles, cremini, morels, oysters
mussels
MUSTARD: Dijon, whole grain mustard seeds
nutmeg

OIL: canola, corn, grapeseed, peanut (for cooking), sesame, vegetable (for cooking)
OLIVE OIL
olives, esp. black, niçoise, picholine, Provençal

ONIONS, esp. pear, red, Vidalia, white
orange: juice, zest
oysters
pancetta
paprika
PARSLEY, flat-leaf
peas
PEPPER: black, green, pink, red, white
Pernod
pike
pineapple and pineapple juice
pistachios
polenta
ponzu sauce
port
POTATOES
radishes
ramps
rice (e.g., basmati, sushi)
roe: flying fish, salmon
rosemary
saffron
sake
SALT: kosher, sea
sauces: béarnaise, beurre blanc, brown butter hollandaise
scallions
scallops
sesame seeds
SHALLOTS
shiso leaves
snails
sole
sorrel
sour cream
soy sauce
spinach
STOCKS: chicken, fish, mussels, veal, vegetable
sugar: brown, white
Tabasco sauce
tamarind
tarragon
THYME
tilefish
TOMATOES

The Flavor Bible

300
tomatoes, sun-dried
truffles: oil, shaved, white
turmeric
vanilla
vermouth
vinegrette
VINEGAR, e.g., balsamic,
champagne, cider, red wine,
rice, sherry, white wine
VINEGAR
watercress
WINE: dry white or red
(Cabernet Sauvignon, Pinot Noir)
zucchini

Flavor Affinities
salmon + apple + horseradish + rosemary
salmon + avocado + chile peppers + grapefruit
salmon + bacon + cabbage + chestnuts
salmon + bacon + lentils + sherry vinegar
salmon + basil + white beans
salmon + beets + crème fraîche + cucumber + horseradish
salmon + caviar + vermouth
salmon + chervil + chives + leeks + lemon + morels + peas + potatoes
salmon + cucumber + balsamic vinegar
salmon + cucumber + dill
salmon + cucumber + dill + horseradish
salmon + cucumber + tomato
salmon + lemon juice + Dijon mustard
salmon + marjoram + peas
salmon + miso + pineapple + tomato + white wine
salmon + mustard + scallions
salmon + orange + tomato
salmon + peas + potatoes
salmon + pineapple + tomatoes
salmon + potato + watercress

SALMON, CURED
Taste: salty
Weight: medium
Volume: moderate–loud
aquavit
avocados
basil
beans, white
bell peppers, red
bread: pumpernickel, rye
caviar
cayenne
Champagne
chives
cream
cream cheese
crème fraîche
dill
honey
horseradish
lemon: juice, zest
lentils, green
lime: juice, zest
mustard: Dijon, dry
olive oil
orange, zest
pepper: black, white
potatoes
salt: kosher, sea
shallots
sour cream
sugar
tarragon
tomatoes

SALMON, SMOKED
Taste: salty
Weight: medium
Volume: moderate–loud
artichokes
avocados
bell peppers, roasted
blini
bread: bagels, pumpernickel, rye, white
My signature sushi roll pairs salmon with mango puree and sushi rice. However, I wouldn't serve salmon with mango puree as sashimi. The balance would be lost. Also, mango doesn't pair well with either soy sauce or wasabi.

— KAZ OKOCHI, KAZ SUSHI BISTRO (WASHINGTON, DC)

We roast salmon wrapped in squash blossom and it imparts a slight zucchini flavor to the salmon. The blossom is mild and makes a perfect package for the salmon by steaming it as it cooks. With the salmon we serve a [zucchini] squash cut into spaghetti seasoned with lemon thyme and basil. The herbs work with both the zucchini and the salmon.

— JERRY TRAUNFELD, THE HERBFARM (WOODINVILLE, WASHINGTON)

I love combining fruit and proteins. I am one-half Hawaiian, and in Hawaiian cooking a classic dish is Spam cooked with fresh pineapple. I grew up with my father making it for us, and it is delicious. You'll also see a lot of sushi chefs combine kiwi and scallops, as fruit adds a nice cleansing note to the protein you are working with. Our take on this combination is pineapple salmon with avocado and quinoa. We cut pineapple very thin, then wrap it around salmon belly, which is very rich. When we cook it, the pineapple gets caramelized and helps cut the fat of the salmon. On the dish is a sweet-hot sauce of avocado, honey, scallions, and serrano chiles. To garnish the dish and add some crunch we add quinoa that is cooked then dried for three days before cooking it in olive oil, which makes it puff like Rice Krispies.

— KATSUYA FUKUSHIMA, MINIBAR (WASHINGTON, DC)

breakfast / brunch
butter: clarified, unsalted
capers
caviar
celery
celery root
Champagne
chervil
chicory
CHIVES
cilantro
cream
CREAM CHEESE
crème fraîche
cucumbers
cumin
daikon
DILL
eggs, esp. hard-boiled, and egg salad
frisée
garlic

Dishes
Smoked Salmon with Crispy Potatoes and Horseradish Cream
— Jean Joho, Brasserie Jo (Chicago)

Rosti Potato Cake with Herb Mascarpone and Fresh-Smoked Salmon
— Monica Pope, T’afia (Houston)

Leek Tart with Smoked Salmon and Crème Fraîche
— Michel Richard, Citronelle (Washington, DC)

ginger, fresh horseradish
juniper
leeks
LEMON: juice, zest lime: juice, zest mascarpone
monkfish
mussels, smoked mustard, Dijon
oil, canola
olive oil
onions, esp. red, sweet orange
oysters
parsley
pasta
PEPPER: black, white Pernod
potatoes and potato salad
radishes
salmon
salmon roe
salt: kosher, sea
scallions
scallops
shallots
shiso leaf
sorrel
sour cream
soy sauce
spinach
stocks: clam, fish
Tabasco sauce
tarragon
tea sandwiches
tomatoes
vinaigrette
vinegar: red wine, rice wine, sherry, white wine
Worcestershire sauce
yogurt (say some)

AVOID
mayonnaise
yogurt (say some)
Flavor Affinities
smoked salmon + chives + crème fraîche + dill + pumpernickel-rye blini
smoked salmon + chives + dill + scrambled eggs + potatoes
smoked salmon + cream cheese + lemon juice + shallots + sour cream
smoked salmon + cucumber + horseradish + mint
smoked salmon + dill + horseradish + lemon juice + sour cream

SALSIFFY
Season: autumn–winter
Taste: sweet
Weight: medium
Volume: moderate
Techniques: bake, braise, pan, roast, stew

anchovies
butter
cheese, Parmesan
chives
cream
duck prosciutto
fish (e.g., halibut)
hollandaise sauce
LEMON, JUICE
maple syrup
mascarpone
mayonnaise
mushrooms
muscat
oil, peanut
onions
orange
parsley
pepper, black
polenta
prosciutto
rice
sage
salmon, smoked
salt, kosher
scallions
shallots
sorrel

We use fleur de sel on cold dishes, such as salads. We also use it on meats like beef, buffalo rib eye, or roast chicken after they are sliced and a moment before serving.
— SHARON HAGE, YORK STREET (DALLAS)

soups
stock, chicken
thyme, fresh
truffles, black
vinaigrettes

SALT — IN GENERAL
Taste: salty
Function: warming

SALT, FLEUR DE SEL
chicken
cold dishes
meats
radishes
salads
steak

SALT, HAWAIIAN
ceviche
chicken
lamb
meat, esp. barbecued
pork
seafood
steak
vegetables, esp. tomatoes

I like to use Hawaiian salt on a dish where I want a little crunch. This holds up better than other salts that will dissolve more quickly. I will use it on ceviche, which has a little broth.
— DANIEL HUMM, ELEVEN MADISON PARK (NEW YORK CITY)

SALT, JAPANESE
fish
foie gras
salmon
sashimi
squid

Japanese salt has ground seaweed in it and works on sashimi. I use this in Japanese dishes.
— DANIEL HUMM, ELEVEN MADISON PARK (NEW YORK CITY)

SALT, KOSHER
breads
brines
charcuterie
cocktails, esp. rims
cooking
cures
meats
potatoes
pretzels
toasts
water for blanching or for pasta

We use kosher salt primarily for meats.
— SHARON HAGE, YORK STREET (DALLAS)

SALT, MALDON
fish, esp. raw
finishing dishes
lobster

[Maldon] is the finest of all salts in regard to both flavor and texture. I appreciate its delicacy on fish, especially lobster.
— DANIEL HUMM, ELEVEN MADISON PARK (NEW YORK CITY)
SALT, SEA — COARSE
meats
seafood
seasoning
vegetables, hearty

SALT, SEA — FINE
baking
fish
seasoning
vegetables, delicate

For delicate foods like vegetables or fish, we use ground sea salt right before it goes into the pan.
— SHARON HAGE, YORK STREET (DALLAS)

SALT, SMOKED
brines, esp. for pork
chicken
fish, esp. raw
meats: barbecued, red
pork
potatoes, baked
seafood
salmon
sardines
steak
tuna
vegetarian dishes

The Danish smoked salt we use is smoked over Chardonnay vines. For us, using smoked salt provides the flavor of cooking over grape vines as they do in Spain. Smoked salt is also great if you don’t have a grill, because even a gas grill can’t provide a smoky flavor. I like smoked salt sprinkled on sardines, which in Spain will be cooked over a fire on the beach where they get really smoky. I can give that sense of place by using this salt on my sardines.
— ALEXANDRA RAJ, TÍA POL (NEW YORK CITY)

SALT, TRUFFLE
egg dishes
pastas
popcorn
potatoes
risotto
salads and salad dressing

SALT, VANILLA
chicken
chocolate, esp. dark
lamb
meats
mussels
nuts
pork
pumpkin
shellfish, esp. lobster or scallops
squash, winter
sweet potatoes

SALTINESS
Taste: salty
Function: heating; stimulates salivation; enhances the flavors of ingredients
Tips: Adding salt to a dish diminishes the effects of bitter, sour, and sweet.
anchovies
bacon
capers
caperberries
caviar and other fish roe
cheeses, salty (e.g., feta, manchego, Parmesan, pecorino)
clams and clam juice
cured meats
dashi (e.g., Japanese stock)
finnan haddie
fish sauce, Asian
gravlax
ham
ingredients with added salt (e.g., chips, nuts)
kelp
lemons, preserved
lox
nuts, salted
olives
oysters
oyster sauce
pancetta
pickles (salty-sour)
prosciutto
salmon, smoked
salt
salt cod
salt pork
sardines
sausages, salty (e.g., chorizo)
sea urchin
sea vegetables
seaweed

If you have a piece of Ibérico or Serrano ham in your refrigerator, you'll eventually end up with this little end of dried-out salt-cured meat. While some might just throw it away, we know there's a lot of flavor left — so we grind it up in a coffee grinder and use it as meat-flavored salt. We call this "ham salt," and will use this on a salad to emphasize the aroma and flavor of pork. In Spain we have mojama, which is tuna loin cured like ham. We'll grind it up in a coffee grinder and it becomes tuna salt. When I sear tuna, I will sprinkle this on and emphasize the tuna with its own tuna flavor. It is simple and dramatic. I even showed this technique to the owner of the best tuna restaurant in the world — called El Campero in Barbate, Spain — where he serves tuna a hundred ways. He loved it!
— JOSÉ ANDRÉS, CAFÉ ATLÁNTICO (WASHINGTON, DC)

We use three different kinds of salt — but we also use capers, anchovies, olives, preserved lemons, and even prosciutto for adding another dimension of saltiness. Even when using these other salty components, 99 percent of the time we'll use them in addition to salt, not instead of it.
— SHARON HAGE, YORK STREET (DALLAS)

Chefs on Selecting and Using Salt

**Kosher salt** has larger, harder crystals and won't break down too fast. I use this for pasta water, brining, curing meat, and charcuterie. I use French sea salt (esp. Baleine) for general seasoning. I like Maldon salt a lot. This is what I use for finishing dishes. It has a really fine crystal and the flavor is great. It even gives some crunch and melts like snowflakes. It is great sprinkled on raw fish.
— ANDREW CARMELLINI, A VOCE (NEW YORK CITY)

**Salt** is now used very often in desserts and unfortunately it doesn't always make sense. I was served a green apple sorbet with salt and it didn't work. Salt does work on sweet oranges, though. If you cut a Cara Cara orange into wedges and sprinkle sea salt on them, they are delicious. Salt also makes sense with caramel and butterscotch. The salt is a contrast to the super sweet, which is why we like PayDay candy bars.
— GINA DEPALMA, BABBO (NEW YORK CITY)

I use Maldon salt flakes as a salt for finishing dishes, and kosher salt for blanching water or when I roast on salt. I'll sometimes use smoked salt with raw fish or in a brine for pork, but it's really strong so you have to be careful with it.
— BRADFORD THOMPSON, MARY ELAINE'S AT THE PHOENICIAN (SCOTTSDALE, ARIZONA)

There is salt in almost all of my desserts. However, you would not know it was there until I took it out — which is how it should be. You don't need to taste the salt, but it helps open the palate and stimulates your taste buds. With something fatty like chocolate, you need some salt to brighten it up. I use all sorts of salts with my desserts. We are making a peanut butter and jelly bonbon that I pair with smoked Brittany sea salt. Maldon salt is shaved and more about texture, because it is not as strong; I would use it on a pancake or something creamy. Fleur de sel is a salt with texture and ocean floral notes, and would go well on our panini which have cheese, arugula, and vinaigrette.
— JOHNNY IUZZINI, JEAN GEORGES (NEW YORK CITY)

Salt goes into almost every dough we make and is something that makes flavors pop. Some chefs can go a little overboard, but desserts should still be sweet. Salt works well with caramel and chocolate, obviously. I also use a vanilla salt with a classic sweet potato tart that is cut into four slices with a few grains on each slice. The salt reinforces the savoriness of the sweet potato and plays off the brightness of the preserved lemon on the plate.
— MICHAEL LAISKONIS, LE BERNARDIN (NEW YORK CITY)

To counteract oversalting a dish, you need to increase the volume of whatever you are making. That can be tricky, because you don't want to end up with something too watery. Whenever there is a puree involved, whether it is mashed potatoes or butternut squash soup, I encourage my cooks to make it thick. You can always add, but not take away.
— ANDREW CARMELLINI, A VOCE (NEW YORK CITY)

Flavor Matchmaking: The Charts 305
seeds, salted
shrimp paste
smoked foods, esp. fish, meats
smoked salmon and trout
soy sauce
tamari
Worcestershire sauce

SARDINES
Season: spring-summer
Taste: salty
Weight: light
Volume: loud
Techniques: braise, broil, fry, grill, marinate, poach, sauté
anchovies
basil
bay leaf
bell peppers, red
bread crumbs
capers
carrots
cayenne
chives
coriander seeds
currants
eggplant
fennel
fennel pollen
fennel seeds
French cuisine
garlic
ham
Italian cuisine, esp. southern
lemon: juice, zest
mirin
oil, peanut
OLIVE OIL
onions: red, white
orange: juice, zest
parsley, flat-leaf
pasta
pepper: black, white
peppers, piquillo
pine nuts
raisins, esp. yellow
red pepper flakes
rosemary
saffron
sage
salt, sea
sour cream
soy sauce
thyme
tomatoes and tomato sauce
verjus
vinaigrette
vinegar, e.g., balsamic, red wine, sherry, white wine
walnuts
wine, dry white (e.g., Chenin Blanc, Grenache, Viognier)
zucchini

SAUSAGES (See also Chorizo)
Weight: light-heavy
Volume: quiet–loud
Techniques: bake, grill, poach, sauté, stew
apples
basil
bay leaf
beans, white
beer
bell peppers: green, red
breakfast
broccoli rabe
butter, unsalted
carrots
celery root
celery seeds
coriander seeds
coriander seeds
fennel
garlic
leeks
lemon, juice

Dishes
Marinated Fresh Sardines with Caramelized Fennel and Lobster Oil
— Mario Batali, Babbo (New York City)

Whole Wheat Spaghetti with Fresh Sardines and Walnuts
— David Pasternak, Esca (New York City)
Dishes
Homemade Alsatian Country Sausage with Turnip Choucroute and Whole Grain Mustard Sauce
— Gabriel Kreuther, The Modern (New York City)

lentils
Mediterranean cuisine
mustard, Dijon
oil, canola
olive oil
ONIONS: white, yellow
oregano
parsley, flat-leaf
pasta
pepper, black
potatoes, esp. boiled, mashed, pureed
radicchio
rosemary
salt, kosher
sauerkraut
scallops
shallots
thyme
tomatoes
vinegar, balsamic
wine, dry white

Flavor Affinities
sausages + mustard + sauerkraut
sausages + onions + potatoes + tomatoes
sausages + radicchio + white beans

SAVORY
Weight: medium, tough-leaved
Volume: moderate—loud
(Summer savory is quieter, winter savory is louder.)
Tips: Can stand up to cooking. Use summer savory with summer vegetables, and winter savory with winter vegetables.

basil
bay leaf
*BEANS, esp. dried, summer (e.g., fava, green, lima)
beef
beets
bell peppers
bouquet garni
braised dishes
Brussels sprouts
cabbage
cheese (e.g., goat) and cheese dishes

Savory in any form — whether summer or winter savory — is my favorite herb. It is not as woody as thyme, not as piney as rosemary, and not as pungent as sage. It also has the ability to stay flavorful throughout the cooking process. I like it with potatoes, with polenta, and with mushrooms. Savory and mushrooms are great. I especially like grilled porcini mushrooms with savory. I'll grill the mushrooms then put them on a bed of savory to finish roasting them. Savory also works in a sherry or red wine vinaigrette with shallots, and is great on salads.
— VITALY PALEY, PALEY’S PLACE (PORTLAND, OREGON)

Flavor Matchmaking: The Charts 307
rabbit
rice
rosemary
sage
salads and salad dressings
sauces and gravies
soups, esp. tomato-based
squash, summer
stews, esp. meat
stuffings (e.g., poultry)
tarragon
thyme
tomatoes and tomato sauces
veal
vegetables, esp. root
vinegar
wine, red
zucchini

Japanese cuisine
Korean cuisine
lemon, juice
mushrooms
mustard, Dijon
nutmeg
olive oil
oregano
paprika
parsley
pepper, white
potatoes
rice
rosemary
sage
salt, kosher

Flavor Affinities
savory + garlic + tomatoes

SCALLIONS
Season: summer
Weight: light
Volume: moderate
Techniques: braise, grill, raw, sauté, stir-fry

anise
basil
bay leaf
bell peppers
butter, unsalted
carrots
cheese: goat, Parmesan
chile peppers
cilantro
cinnamon
cloves
cream
cream cheese
curry
dill
egg dishes
garlic
greens, bitter
honey
sesame oil
sugar
Thai cuisine
thyme
tomatoes
vinegar

Dishes
— Rick Bayless, Frontera Grill (Chicago)
Fresh-Grilled Sea Scallops Baked Over Rosemary Salt, with Creamy Polenta and Tomato-Citrus Vinaigrette
— Daniel Boulud, Daniel (New York City)
Diver Sea Scallops: Fennel Ravioli, Fricassee of Chantrelles, Artichoke, and Arugula
— Daniel Boulud/Olivier Muller, DB Bistro Moderne (New York City)
Maine Diver Scallops with English Peas, Smoked Bacon, Pickled Ramps, and Perigord Truffle Nage
— Traci Des Jardins, Jardiniere (San Francisco)
Maine Diver Scallops Grilled with Ruby Grapefruit, Spring Potatoes, and Basil
— Daniel Humm, Eleven Madison Park (New York City)
Sea of Cortez “Mano de Leon” Scallops Scented with Citrus, Spices, and Vanilla Bean, Caramelized Belgian Endive, Ruby Red Grapefruit, Mâche, and Mint
— Carrie Nahabedian, Naha (Chicago)
Bay Scallops with Mushrooms, Peppers, and Grilled Italian Sausage
— Patrick O’Connell, The Inn at Little Washington (Washington, Virginia)
Delicate Sake-Poached Sea Scallops with Lemon and Cilantro
— Kaz Okochi, Kaz Sushi Bistro (Washington, DC)
Linguine with Taylor Bay Scallops, Maine Mussels, Hot Red Pepper, and Pancetta
— David Pasternak, Esca (New York City)
Scallops with Roasted Brussels Sprouts and Pancetta
— David Pasternak, Esca (New York City)
We have served cinnamon-dusted sea scallops, and they were very tasty.
— MARCEL DESAULNIERS, THE TRELLIS (WILLIAMSBURG, VIRGINIA)

You’ll find sushi chefs combining scallops with kiwi.
— KATSUYA FUKUSHIMA, MINIBAR (WASHINGTON, DC)

We offer Gulf of Maine sea scallops scented with citrus, spices, and vanilla bean, caramelized Belgian endive, ruby red grapefruit, mâche, and mint. The dish came about because I love vanilla and grapefruit. I came up with the idea that I would use dry citrus to powder my scallops. Then I realized that was just one note, so I added some spice which led to star anise, fennel, and anise seed. I sauce the dish with a beurre blanc and grapefruit syrup made of fresh grapefruit, candied peel, and fresh vanilla bean. Since the sauce has butter and cream, I had to be careful not to turn this into vanilla crème brûlée! I love caramelized endive because you have a bitter vegetable that you make sweet. We cook it in whole butter and just as it starts to brown we sprinkle in sugar. This balances the tart and sweet of the grapefruit and the sweetness of the scallops.
— CARRIE NAHABEDIAN, NAHA (CHICAGO)

Sear scallops on one side only, or else they'll be overcooked. Accent them with coconut milk, garlic, ginger, or lemongrass. Or, puree sea scallops with cream and cook them slowly in a double boiler, which gives them the appearance of white scrambled eggs. This pairs beautifully with caviar, chopped raw onion, or truffles.
— MICHEL RICHARD, CITRONELLE (WASHINGTON, DC)

Scallops with chanterelles and green parsley sauce is as beautiful on the plate as it is on the palate.
— HIRO SONE, TERRA (ST. HELENA, CALIFORNIA)

Nantucket bay scallops are magically delicious, and pairing them with duck fat is an unusual combination that works. It is essentially scallops Provençal, but instead of using olive oil you use duck fat that gives you a silky quality. It is an enormously fun dish to cook and you use your eyes and nose to cook it. You heat up duck fat, getting it really hot, then sauté the scallops really fast. After taking them out, add chopped garlic and tomato concassee. It moves along quickly; hit it with chicken stock, adjust it with some lemon juice, and let it reduce and emulsify. You add your scallops back in with some chiffonade of basil and it's done. The dish smells so good while you're cooking it, between the garlic, the scallops, and the duck fat. The whole thing is done in one shot. No resting, no slicing, no elaborate plating. It's fun, and it's delicious.
— DAVID WALTUCK, CHANTERELLE (NEW YORK CITY)
SCAllOPS  (CONT.)

fennel seeds
fish sauce, Thai
French cuisine
GARLIC
ginger
grapefruit: juice, zest
gremolata
ham
haricots verts
honey
horseradish
kaffir lime
kiwi fruit
leeks
LEMON: juice, zest
lemon thyme
lentils
LIME: juice, zest
lobster
mango
marjoram
mascarpone
mint
morels
mushrooms: button, chanterelle,
cremini, Japanese, porcini,
portobello, shiitake
mussels
mustard, Dijon
OIL: canola, corn, grapeseed,
peanut, vegetable
oil: almond, hazelnut
olive oil
onions, esp. red, white, yellow
orange: juice, zest
pandetta
PARSLEY, flat-leaf
passion fruit
pasta
peas
PEPPER: black, white
Pernod
pineapple
pomegranates and pomegranate juice
potatoes, esp. mashed
red pepper flakes
rice
rosemary
saffron
sake
salmon roe
salsify
SALT: kosher, sea
sauce, béchamel
sausages, chorizo
scallions
sea urchin
sesame: seeds, oil
SHALLOTS
shrimp
sole
soy sauce
spinach
squash, butternut
sraud
stocks: chicken, clam, fish,
shrimp, veal, vegetable

Flavor Affinities

scallops + almonds + cauliflower
scallops + apples + bacon + watercress
scallops + apples + tarragon
scallops + asparagus + butter + lemongrass
scallops + avocado + lemon + lobster
scallops + bacon + chives
scallops + bacon + garlic + chanterelle mushrooms
scallops + bacon + leeks
scallops + basil + caviar + chives + tomatoes
scallops + basil + chicken stock + duck fat + garlic + lemon juice + tomatoes
scallops + basil + grapefruit
scallops + bay leaf + vanilla
scallops + Brussels sprouts + pancetta
scallops + carrot juice + pomegranate juice
scallops + cauliflower + cream
scallops + cilantro + lemon + sake
scallops + coriander + crab + lemon + thyme
scallops + dashi + Japanese mushrooms
scallops + edamame + mint
scallops + fennel + lemon + parsley
scallops + fennel + orange + rosemary
scallops + garlic + mushrooms
scallops + ginger + mint
scallops + ginger + scallions
scallops + ham + pineapple
scallops + kaffir lime + lemongrass + peanuts
scallops + parsley + salmon roe

sugar
Tabasco sauce
tarragon, fresh
THYME, FRESH
tomatoes: canned, fresh, paste
truffles, esp. black, white
tuna
turnips
vanilla
vermouth
vinaigrette
VINEGAR: balsamic, champagne,
cider, red wine, rice wine, sherry,
tarragon, white wine
watercress
WINE, DRY WHITE (e.g., Chablis,
Chardonnay, Meursault, Riesling,
Sauvignon Blanc)
Vermouth
yuzu juice
zucchini
SCANDINAVIAN CUISINE

aquavit
cardamom, esp. in baked goods
cinnamon
cucumbers
dill
fruits, esp. stewed
ginger
herring, pickled
juniper berries
nutmeg
onions
salmon, cured (aka gravlax)
soups, fruit
sour cream

Flavor Affinities
apples + cinnamon + sugar
cardamom + ginger + cinnamon
+ nutmeg + cloves
cucumbers + dill + onions + sugar
+ vinegar

SCOTCH

Weight: medium–heavy
Volume: moderate–loud

bitters
Earl Grey tea
gin
ginger
lemon, juice
lime, juice

orange, juice
soda
tamarind syrup
vermouth

Flavor Affinities
scotch + Earl Grey tea + tamarind syrup
scotch + ginger + lemon juice

During the winter months, I'll turn to bourbon and brown spirits to make cocktails. But non-scotch drinkers might turn their noses up at a cocktail with scotch in the name, so I created the Scotty and Tammy — an Earl Grey tea–based scotch drink made with tamarind syrup that goes especially well with Indian food.

— JERRI BANKS, COCKTAIL CONSULTANT (NEW YORK CITY)

The combination of ginger and scotch is explosive! I think the combination of ginger and lemon is such a welcoming flavor and can take on almost any spirit. Ginger itself is one of the most compelling scents and flavors in the world. Nothing else comes close.

— JERRI BANKS, COCKTAIL CONSULTANT (NEW YORK CITY)

SEAFOOD — IN GENERAL (See also specific fish and Shellfish)

Tips: Tap these ideas when cooking a medley of assorted seafood.

apples, esp. green
avocados
brandy, dry
capers
citrus
fennel
fruit
garlic
LEMON JUICE
mint
Old Bay seasoning
olive oil

We use the Seafood Watch guide from the Monterey Bay Aquarium to help select the fish we serve.

— MONICA POPE, T'AFIA (HOUSTON)

We work to inspire a closer relationship with the sea through science, art, and literature [including its Guide to Ocean Friendly Seafood].

— BLUE OCEAN INSTITUTE
olives
onions
parsley, flat-leaf
pepper: white, black
red pepper flakes
rosemary
saffron
salt
shallots
sherry
vinaigrettes
vinegars
wine: dry white (e.g., Sancerre, Soave)

**Flavor Affinities**

seafood + brandy + sherry
seafood + fennel + lemon + mint
seafood + green apple + ginger

---

**Dishes**

**Spicy Gazpacho with Chilled Seafood Salad and Sweet Herbs**
— Vitaly Paley, Paley’s Place (Portland, Oregon)

**Seafood Salad: Scallops, Squid, Japanese Octopus, Lobster, Avocado, Lemon Vinaigrette**
— Alfred Portale, Gotham Bar and Grill (New York City)

**The Cure Crudo: Tuna Bresaola, Citrus Sardine, and Smoked Scallop with Blood Orange**
— Barton Seaver, Hook (Washington, DC)

**Seafood Salad with Chickpeas, Celery, and Black Olives**
— Hiro Sone, Terra (St. Helena, California)
**SESAME OIL**
(See Oil, Sesame)

**SESAME SEEDS, BLACK**
*Taste:* bitter
*Weight:* light
*Volume:* quiet
*Tips:* Use whole seeds.

apples
Asian cuisine
bananas
Chinese cuisine
fish
Japanese cuisine
lemon, juice
meats
mirin
rice
salt
seafood
sesame seeds, white
soy sauce
vegetables
vinegar, rice wine

cinnamon
cloves
coriander
duck
eggplant
fish
garlic
ginger
honey
hummus
ice cream
Indian cuisine
Japanese cuisine
lamb
Lebanese cuisine
legumes
lemon
meats
mole sauces
Middle Eastern cuisine
noodles
nutmeg
orange
oregano
paprika
pepper
rice

**SALADS** (green, pasta) and salad dressings
scallions
scallops
sesame oil
shellfish
shrimp
soy sauce
spinach
stir-fried dishes
sugar
sumac
tahini paste (key ingredient)
thyme
Turkish cuisine
vanilla
vegetables, esp. cold, green
zucchini

**Flavor Affinities**

sesame seeds + garlic + soy sauce + spinach

**SHALLOTS**
*Season:* summer
*Taste:* sweet
*Botanical relatives:* chives, garlic, leeks, onions
*Weight:* light-medium
*Volume:* moderate
*Techniques:* blanch, braise, deep-fry, fry, roast, sauté, stir-fry
*Tips:* Shallots are milder than garlic or onions.

beef
butter
capers
chicken
chives
cod
cognac
cream
fish, esp. baked, grilled
French cuisine, esp. sauces
garlic
halibut
lemon, juice
meats, esp. grilled, roasted
mustard, Dijon
nutmeg
olive oil
oysters
parsley, flat-leaf
pasta
pepper, white
port
salads and salad dressings
salt
sauces (e.g., béarnaise, bordelaise, red wine)
sherry
squash, butternut
steak
stock, chicken
sugar (pinch)
tarragon
thyme
tomatoes
veal
vinaigrettes
vinaigrette: balsamic, champagne, cider, red wine, sherry, white wine
wine

**SHELLFISH** (See also Crab, Lobster, Scallops, Shrimp, etc.)

*Season:* summer

- almonds
- bacon
- basil
- celery
- chives
- cilantro
- coconut
- cream
- curry
- fennel
- fines herbes (i.e., chervil, chives, parsley, tarragon)
- fruit
- garlic
- ginger
- grapefruit
- hoisin sauce
- LEMON
- lemongrass
- Old Bay seasoning
- orange
- saffron
- tarragon
- tomatoes
- vanilla
- vinegar
- watermelon
- wines, dry white (e.g., Sauvignon Blanc)

**Flavor Affinities**

shellfish + almonds + vanilla
shellfish + curry + lemongrass
shellfish + saffron + cream

**SHIITAKE MUSHROOMS**

(See Mushrooms — Shiitakes)

Fruit works easily with *shellfish*. You need to be careful, though, and counteract some of the sweetness of the fruit with vinegar or a citrus juice like lemon. Watermelon works well with shellfish, and I particularly like it with lobster, shrimp, and crab.

— **GABRIEL KREUTHER,** THE MODERN (NEW YORK CITY)

I love Provençal-style *shellfish* cooked with saffron and cream.

— **HIRO SONE,** TERRA (ST. HELENA, CALIFORNIA)

I love vanilla with *shellfish* because it brings out the sweetness. It works with scallops, lobster, or shrimp. I make a lobster-vanilla bisque that is one of my favorite soups. I also serve a scallop dish with vanilla, almonds, and orange. The vanilla brings up the sweet, the almonds add crispness to the creamy rich scallops, and the orange adds some acid. The dish also works really well with grapefruit instead of orange and gives it a tart flavor as well.

— **BOB IACOVONE,** CUVÉE (NEW ORLEANS)

**SHISO LEAF**

*Weight:* light

*Volume:* moderate—loud

*Techniques:* raw

- apples
- avocados
- basil
- beef
- cabbage
- chicken
- chives
- clams
- crab
- cucumbers
- fish, esp. fried or oily
- fried foods
- ginger

**Japanese cuisine**

Visually you can't beat shiso; it is a big, beautiful leaf. It is great with fried foods, oily fish, and sea urchin, and pairs with big, robust flavors. Instead of grabbing lemon or soy sauce, you can use shiso to liven up a dish.

— **BRAD FARMERIE,** PUBLIC (NEW YORK CITY)

**Shiso** is a very versatile herb and works with a lot of things. It can work with pears as well as apples, not to mention a variety of seafood like Dungeness crab and spot prawns.

— **JERRY TRAUNFELD,** THE HERBFARM (WOODINVILLE, WASHINGTON)
### Flavor Affinities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ingredients</th>
<th>Matches</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>shiso leaf + avocado + crab</td>
<td>shiso leaf + clams + onions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SHORT RIBS (See Beef — Short Ribs)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### SHORT RIBS (See Beef — Short Ribs)

**Shrimp** (See also Shellfish)

- **Season:** year-round
- **Weight:** light-medium (depending on size)
- **Volume:** quiet
- **Techniques:** bake, barbecue, boil, broil, deep-fry, grill, poach, roast, sauté, steam, stir-fry

- allspice
- almonds
- apples and apple cider
- artichokes
- arugula
- asparagus
- avocado
- bacon
- basil
- bay leaf
- beans: black, cranberry, fava, green, white
- beer
- bell peppers, red
- bonito flakes (e.g., Japanese)
- brandy
- bread crumbs, panko
- brown butter sauce
- butter, unsalted
- cabbage: green, red
- Cajun cuisine
- carrots and carrot juice
- caviar
- cayenne
- celery
- celery root
- chervil
- chicory
- CHILE PEPPERS, e.g., ancho, chipotle, dried red, jalapeño, serrano
- chili oil
- chili paste
- chili powder
- chili sauce
- Chinese cuisine
- chives
- cilantro (garnish)
- cinnamon
- clams
- cloves
- coconut: milk, shredded
- cognac
- coriander
- corn
- CRAB
- cream
- Creole cuisine
- cucumbers
- cumin
- curry leaf
- curry powder or sauce
- dill
- eggs
- endive
- fennel
- fennel seeds
- fish, white
- fish sauce, Thai
- *GARLIC*
- ginger
- greens, esp. beet, dandelion, collard, mustard, turnip
- grits
- hazelnut oil
- honey
- horseradish
- Japanese cuisine
- kaffir lime leaf
- ketchup
- Korean cuisine
- leeks
- LEMON: juice, zest
- lemongrass
- lettuce
- lime: leaves, juice, whole, zest
- lobster
- mango
- marjoram
- mayonnaise
- Mediterranean cuisine
- melon, cantaloupe
- Mexican cuisine
- mint
- mirin
- monkfish
- mushrooms, (e.g., chanterelles, shiitakes)
- mussels
- mustard: country, Dijon, dry (sauce)
- mustard seeds
- nutmeg
- OIL: canola, corn, grapeseed, peanut, vegetable
- oil: peanut, sesame (for drizzling)
- Old Bay seasoning
- olive oil
- olives, black
- ONIONS, esp. red, Spanish, white
- orange: juice, zest
- oregano
- oysters
- paprika
- parsley, flat-leaf
- pasta
- peanuts
- PEPPER: black, white
- pesto
- pike
- pineapple and pineapple juice
- pine nuts
- pistachios
- pumpkin
Dishes
Black Spaghetti with Rock Shrimp, Spicy Salami Calabrese, and Green Chiles
— Mario Batali, Babbo (New York City)

Ceviche Yucateco: Steamed Organic Shrimp and Calamari Tossed with Lime, Orange, Habanero, Avocado, and Cilantro
— Rick Bayless, Frontera Grill (Chicago)

Phyllo-Crust Shrimp with Crabmeat in an Ocean Herbal Broth
— David Bouley, Bouley (New York City)

Shrimp Sautéed in a Spicy Sauce with Jalapeño, Mint, and Garlic, Topped with Shredded Fresh Coconut
— Zarela Martinez, Zarela (New York City)

Chipotle Shrimp Corn Cakes
— Mark Miller, Coyote Café (Santa Fe)

Shrimp with White Bean Salad and Italian Sausage
— Patrick O’Connell, The Inn at Little Washington (Washington, Virginia)

Sweet Shrimp Risotto: Roma Tomatoes, Wilted Arugula, and Crisp Bacon
— Alfred Portale, Gotham Bar and Grill (New York City)

Shrimp in Light Three-Pepper Red Mole Sauce (Coloradito) over Cuban-Style Fresh Corn Polenta and Sautéed Kale
— Maricel Presilla, Zafra (Hoboken, New Jersey)

Fricassee of Rock Shrimp, Mango, Leeks, and Coconut Rum
— Allen Susser, Chef Allen’s (Aventura, Florida)

Shrimp and Avocado Ceviche, Kaffir Lime, Coconut Milk, Scallions, and Pappadam
— Allen Susser, Chef Allen’s (Aventura, Florida)

Shrimp shells are a base for a great sauce. They are really sweet, and you want to be sure to brown all the shrimp shell surfaces to get the maximum sweetness. This sauce came about by smelling the shells while they were cooking, and working with the flavors that came to mind. I added vanilla and whiskey, and something magical happened.
— CARRIE NAHABEDIAN, NAHA (CHICAGO)

radishes
red pepper flakes
rice (e.g., Arborio, bomba)
risotto
rosemary
rum, dark
saffron
sage
sake
salsa
SALT: kosher, sea
sauce, romesco
sausages (e.g., andouille)
scallions
scallop
sesame: oil, seeds
shallots
shiso leaf
snow peas
sour cream
Southern cuisine
soy sauce
spinach
squid
squid ink
star anise
stocks: chicken, clam, fish, shrimp
sugar: brown, white
sweet potatoes
Tabasco sauce
tarragon
teasandwiches
tempura
Thai cuisine
thyme, lemon
TOMATOES and tomato paste,
sun-dried
turmeric
vanilla
vermouth
Vietnamese cuisine
vinaigrette
vinegar: balsamic, rice wine,
sherry, tarragon, wine
wasabi
watercress
WINE: dry white, rice, Sauternes
Worcestershire sauce
yogurt
yuzu juice
zucchini
Flavor Affinities

shrimp + bacon + chives
shrimp + basil + garlic + jalapeño chile
shrimp + black beans + coriander
shrimp + cayenne + cinnamon + orange
shrimp + cepes mushrooms + curry powder + Dijon mustard
shrimp + chiles + lime juice + brown sugar
shrimp + coriander + tarragon
shrimp + crab + Old Bay seasoning
shrimp + crab + pistachio nuts + watercress
shrimp + garlic + grits + mascarpone + tomato
shrimp + garlic + lime
shrimp + garlic + mustard + tarragon
shrimp + ginger + green apple + saffron
shrimp + horseradish + ketchup + lemon
shrimp + white beans + bell pepper + orange + sausage
The Flavor Bible

SKATE
Season: summer
Weight: medium-heavy
Volume: quiet–moderate
Techniques: broil, grill, poach, roast, sauté, steam

almonds
anchovies
arugula
bay leaf
butter and butter sauces (e.g., brown butter)
CAPERS
carrots
cayenne
celery and celery leaves
chives
cilantro
clams
cloves
dill
eggplant
fennel
garlic
leeks
LEMON, juice
lemon balm
lovage
mustard, Dijon
OIL: canola, peanut, sesame, vegetable
OLIVE OIL
onions
orange, juice
parsley, flat-leaf
parsnips
pasta
pepper: black, green, white
pistachios
polenta
ponzu sauce
potatoes
pumpkin seeds
rosemary
saffron
sage

Dishes
Skate with Hen-of-the-Woods (Mushrooms) and Butternut Squash
— Mario Batali, Babbo (New York City)

Chantelle-Stuffed Skate, Creamy Spinach, “Carotte Fondante,” and Bordelaise Sauce
— Daniel Boulud, Daniel (New York City)

Sautéed Skate Wing with Caper Brown Butter
— Jean Joho, Brasserie Jo (Chicago)

Skate Wing and a Cannelloni of “Sunchoke” with Butter-Poached Chesapeake Bay Lump Crab, Jerusalem Artichokes, and Oyster Mushrooms
— Carrie Nahabedian, Naha (Chicago)

Sage goes really well with skate — it gives the skate a masculine touch.
— ERIC RIPERT, LE BERNARDIN (NEW YORK CITY)

I make a sautéed skate dish that is basically a version of linguini with white clam sauce. The sauce with the skate is made from the juice from the clams, garlic, anchovy, and olive oil and it is finished with a parsley puree. With the fish I also serve angel hair pasta. All these flavors are what you will find in white clam sauce, but are just served in a different form.
— DAVID WALTUCK, CHANTERELLE (NEW YORK CITY)

We still have the same philosophy as when we opened: The fish is still the star of the plate. We have not budged from there, but every dish has a sauce that completes the dish, and brings together all the elements on the plate and creates harmony. We pay homage to seafood and are dedicated to it, but use a wide palette from rich sauces to broths and a variety of spices and emulsions.

What makes a dish work is the way we make and treat our sauce. We don’t make a sauce in the morning and use it for the day. Can you imagine if you made coffee in the morning and came back at noon to taste it? It would be disgusting. The same for tea: if you left a tea bag in your tea all day, at night it would be awful.

We used to make a garlic sage broth and I found it to be very volatile. I realized that the sauce is really only good for three minutes. After that, the sage kills the garlic or vice versa and the sauce loses its balance. What we ended up doing is making a base with chicken stock then using a tea bag with ingredients in it to infuse the sauce, and we serve it right away. This sauce is paired with skate roasted in goose fat with green peppercorns. On the side we serve artichokes with pistachios and Parmesan cheese.
— ERIC RIPERT, LE BERNARDIN (NEW YORK CITY)
sake
salt: kosher, sea
shallots
shrimp
spinach
squid
star anise
tapenade
tarragon
thyme
tomatoes and tomato paste
vinaigrette
VINEGAR: balsamic, red wine, rice wine, sherry
walnuts
wine: dry white, red

Flavor Affinities
skate + butter + pistachios
skate + capers + garlic + lemon juice
skate + capers + sherry vinegar
skate + fennel + onions
skate + garlic + sage

SLOW-COOKED
Season: autumn-winter
Tips: These herbs and flavorings taste better with longer cooking. For the opposite of slow-cooked, see Freshness.

cumin
garlic
ginger
horseradish
onions
oregano
rosemary
shallots
thyme

SMOKED SALMON
(See Salmon, Smoked)

SMOKINESS
Tips: Add a smoky component to provide a “meaty” flavor to a dish or to counteract the richness of certain meats and seafoods.

bacon
barbecued foods
beer, smoked
cheese, smoked
chile peppers, chipotle
duck, smoked
dish, smoked (e.g., salmon, trout)
grilled foods
ham, smoked
liquid smoke
paprika, smoked
salmon, smoked
salt, smoked
sausage, smoked
tea, Lapsang Souchong
whiskey, scotch

SNAP PEAS
(aka sugar snap peas)
Season: spring
Taste: sweet
Weight: light
Volume: quiet
Techniques: blanch, raw, steam, stir-fry

almonds
basil
brown butter sauce
butter
carrots
celery
chervil
chives
cilantro
cream
curry
dill
garlic
ginger
ahalibut
leeks
lemon, juice
marjoram
mint

Dishes
Alaskan King Salmon with Sugar Snap Peas
— David Pasternak, Esca
(New York City)
mushrooms
nutmeg
olive oil
onions
oregano
parsley
pepper, white
potatoes
rice
rosemary
saffron
sage
salmon
scallions
sesame oil
sesame seeds
shrimp
stock, vegetable
tarragon
thyme
yogurt

SNAPPER (aka red snapper)
Season: late spring–early autumn
Weight: medium
Volume: moderate
Techniques: bake, braise, broil, deep-fry, grill, poach, roast, sauté, steam, stir-fry

almonds
apricots, esp. dried
artichokes
basil (garnish)
bay leaf
bell peppers: green, red, yellow
butter, unsalted
cabbage
capers
carrots
cayenne
celery and celery leaves
chile peppers: chipotle, jalapeño
chives
cilantro
clams
coconut
coriander
couscous
crab
cream
cumin
dill
fennel
fennel seeds
five-spice powder
GARLIC
ginger
grapefruit
hazelnuts
leeks
LEMON: fruit, juice, zest
lemon thyme
lime, juice
mint
miso: dried, white
mushrooms: cepes, chanterelles
mustard, Dijon
OIL: canola, corn, grapeseed,
vegetable
OLIVE OIL
olives: black, kalamata
onions: red, white
orange: juice, zest
papaya
paprika
parsley, flat-leaf
peas, sugar snap
pepper: black, white
pesto
pistachios, esp. as crust
port
potatoes
red pepper flakes

Dishes
Marinated Thai Snapper with Wasabi Cream;
Shaved Radishes and Poppy Seed Tuile
— Daniel Boulud, Daniel (New York City)

rice
rosemary
saffron
SALT: kosher, sea
sauces: brown butter,
hollandaise, romesco
sausage, esp. spicy
scallions
seaweed (for presentation)
sesame
shallots
shrimp
spinach
star anise
stocks: chicken, fish
sugar
sweet potatoes
**Flavor Affinities**

snapper + clams + romesco sauce + sausage
snapper + fennel + olives + orange + saffron
snapper + coconut + crab + papaya
snapper + garlic + potatoes + rosemary
snapper + lemon + thyme + tomatoes

---

**SOLE**

**Weight**: light  
**Volume**: quiet  
**Techniques**: pan sear, poach, sauté, steam

artichokes  
asparagus  
basil: sweet, lemon  
bass  
bay leaf  
beans, fava  
bread crumbs  
**BUTTER, unsalted**  
buttermilk  
capers  
carrots  
cayenne  
celery and celery leaves  
chervil  
**CHIVES**  
coriander  
cornmeal  
couscous  
cream  
dill  
endive  
French cuisine  
garlic  
ginger  
greens, collard  
**LEMON**: juice, slices

lobster  
mayonnaise  
Mediterranean cuisine  
milk  
mint, esp. spearmint  
mushrooms: button, morels  
mussels  
noodles  
oil: canola, corn, grapeseed, olive, peanut, vegetable  
olive oil  
oysters  
paprika  
PARSLEY, flat-leaf  
peas  
PEPPER: black, pink, white  
potatoes  
quince  
ramps  
salmon  
SALT: kosher, sea  
sauces: brown butter, hollandaise  
**SHALLOTS**  
shrimp  
spinach  
star anise  
stock, fish  
TARRAGON  
thyme  
tomatoes  
truffles  
vinegar, balsamic

---

**WINE, DRY WHITE**  
(e.g., Chablis)

**Flavor Affinities**

sole + butter + lemon + parsley  
sole + paprika + potatoes

---

**SORREL**

**Season**: spring–autumn  
**Taste**: sour  
**Weight**: medium, soft-leaved  
**Volume**: moderate–loud  
**Tips**: Always use fresh; as a soft-leaved herb, it will lose flavor in sauces, soups.

almonds  
apples  
avocados  
bacon  
basil  
**BUTTER, UNSALTED**  
carrots  
caviar  
chard  
**CHEESE**: Emmental, goat,  
Gruyère, Parmesan, pecorino,  
ricotta, Swiss  
chervil  
chicken  
chives  
cilantro  
collard greens  
**CREAM**  
crème fraîche  
cucumbers  
dandelion greens  
dill  
**EGGS**: egg-based dishes, omelets  
escarole  
**FISH**  
French cuisine  
garlic  
grapes  
greens  
leeks  
lemon, juice
Dishes
Puree of Sorrel Soup with Toasted Marcona Almonds and Poached Sultanas
— Thomas Keller, The French Laundry (Yountville, California)

Sorrel has a green vegetal quality and is tangy. It is a little like tasting fish sauce: on its own it is nasty, but with food it is great! Sorrel also works with eggs as well as seafood. One of the seafood dishes we make is roasted oysters with bacon and sorrel sauce.
— JERRY TRAUNFELD, THE HERBFARM (WOODINVILLE, WASHINGTON)

lemon verbena
lentils, esp. green
lettuce
lovage
marinades
meats
mint
mushrooms
mussels
mustard
nutmeg
olive oil
onions
paprika
parsley, flat-leaf
parsnip
pepper: black, white
pork
potatoes, esp. new, russet
poultry
rice
salads (say some)
salmon
salmon, smoked
salt
sauces, cream
seafood
shad
shallots
shellfish
SOUPS, esp. creamy vegetable
sour cream
SPINACH
STOCKS: chicken, veal, vegetable
stuffings
tarragon
tea sandwiches

thyme, lemon
tomatoes
tROUT
veal
vegetarian dishes
vinaigrette
watercress
wine, dry white

AVOID
salads (say some)

**Flavor Affinities**
sorrel + butter + chicken stock
sorrel + garlic + spinach
sorrel + leeks + potatoes
sorrel + nutmeg + ricotta cheese

**SOUR CREAM**

Taste: sour
Weight: medium–heavy
Volume: moderate–loud
Tips: Use fresh, or cook at low temperatures only.

baked goods (e.g., cakes, cookies)
borscht
caviar
desserts
dill
dips

I like galangal, lemongrass, and ginger. They all have natural acidity and zingy spice that will perk anything up. Even if you are not adding [a liquid] acid to coconut milk but add aromatics instead, your dish won’t taste heavy.
— BRAD FARMERIE, PUBLIC (NEW YORK CITY)

European cuisine, esp. eastern and northern fruit
horseradish
Hungarian cuisine
lemon, juice
mustard
paprika
pepper
potatoes, esp. baked
Russian cuisine
salads and salad dressings
sauces
Scandinavian cuisine
soups

**SOURNESS**

Taste: sour
Function: heating; stimulates appetite; increases thirst
Tips: Sourness tends to sharpen other flavors.
In small doses, sour notes enhance bitterness, while in large doses, they suppress bitterness.

apples, tart (e.g., Granny Smith, Winesap)
blackberries
buttermilk
caraway seeds
citrus
corin

clove
cranberries
cream cheese
c spectacular
crème fraîche

AVOID salads (say some)

Flavor Affinities
sorrel + butter + chicken stock
sorrel + garlic + spinach
sorrel + leeks + potatoes
sorrel + nutmeg + ricotta cheese

SOUR CREAM
Taste: sour
Weight: medium–heavy
Volume: moderate–loud
Tips: Use fresh, or cook at low temperatures only.

baked goods (e.g., cakes, cookies)
borscht
caviar
desserts
dill
dips

I like galangal, lemongrass, and ginger. They all have natural acidity and zingy spice that will perk anything up. Even if you are not adding [a liquid] acid to coconut milk but add aromatics instead, your dish won’t taste heavy.
— BRAD FARMERIE, PUBLIC (NEW YORK CITY)
A defining factor for American cooks is hitting high notes with acidic tones. Using acidity to create brightness in dishes stands out from the cooking I did in France. French cooking is all about harmony, while American cooking is about hitting the high notes. In American fine dining, you have to have some boundaries with your acidity because you are working with wine. It is important to hit the high notes but you have to do it without destroying the wine pairing.
— MICHAEL ANTHONY, GRAMERCY TAVERN (NEW YORK CITY)

Almost every dish has to have some sort of acid, or else it will taste flat. It is a question of taste — some chefs like sour, some like sweet — and there is no right or wrong. Lemon juice is used in small amounts to bring out other flavors. I use all kinds of vinegars — banyuls, red wine, rice wine, and sherry, just to name a few.
— DAVID WALTUCK, CHANTERELLE (NEW YORK CITY)

I have a cupboard full of acids! Every culture is doing the same thing when it comes to using acid in its food: it is all about enhancing flavor without adding salt. We use a lot of citrus, whether it is lemon, lime, or something else. When I lived in England, they joked with me because I would add orange juice to almost everything, especially vinaigrettes. I really like its acidity and the light, fruity flavor it adds. On a totally different end of the spectrum is tamarind. We always have tamarind water in our refrigerator and use it to finish sauces. Depending on the country of inspiration, I will use a different acid: for India, tamarind; Japan, ponzu, yuzu; Middle East, sumac, preserved lemon, and yogurt; and for Southeast Asia, lemon, lime, and tamarind.
— BRAD FARMERIE, PUBLIC (NEW YORK CITY)

I select my acids as carefully as I select my sweeteners. I could use lemon juice for everything, but in some cases, verjus will add a brightness that balsamic or sherry vinegar won’t. I love verjus and have served it alone as a sorbet. I have also served it with apple and pears. I like ice wine vinegar with roasting fruits. Aged balsamic vinegar isn’t shocking anymore — it is great straight over fruit or added to an ice cream.
— MICHAEL LAISKONIS, LE BERNARDIN (NEW YORK CITY)

When you add acid to a sauce, it lifts everything up. Lemon is my favorite; I use lemon and orange the way a chef uses salt and pepper. Whether I add the juice, zest, or confit depends on the cooking application:

• Juice: If a recipe calls for water, why use that? Why not add flavor and use orange juice?
• Zest: If I make panna cotta, it will have orange zest in it but it will not taste orangey. If I make a cake, I also use zest.
• Confit: I use this most often as a garnish.
— MICHAEL LAISKONIS, LE BERNARDIN (NEW YORK CITY)
SOUS-VIDE COOKING
What sous-vide ["under vacuum"] cooking does is give you a long, very controlled cooking time. I like to use it on vegetables because no air hits the vegetable. All the white vegetables come out really white. It also keeps the whiteness in fruits like apples and pears.
— DANIEL HUMM, ELEVEN MADISON PARK (NEW YORK CITY)

Instead of sous-vide, with poultry I’ll use a poaching technique I learned from my grandmother: I’ll cover a whole chicken or turkey or pheasant with cold liquid, mirepoix, garlic, and herbs; cover the pot with a tight-fitting lid; bring it to a boil; drop it to a simmer; and then turn it off. This technique creates a vacuum seal that transfers all the flavor into the chicken. It’s ten times better than straight poaching, because you don’t lose any moisture. I’ll serve the chicken cold with a hot ginger sauce that’s two parts fresh ginger to one part each garlic, scallions, and cilantro. I heat oil to smoking, pour it over the herbs, and serve the hot ginger-herb sauce over the cold poached chicken. It’s delicious.
— TONY LIU, AUGUST (NEW YORK CITY)

SOUTHEAST ASIAN CUISINES
Tips: Balance hot + sour + salty + sweet tastes.

chile peppers
coconut milk
curries
fish sauce
galangal
ginger
lemongrass
lime
mint
soy sauce
sugar
tamarind
vegetables: fresh, fermented

Flavor Affinities
chile peppers + fish sauce + lime + sugar
fish sauce + lime + tamarind

SOUTHERN CUISINE (AMERICAN)
baked goods, e.g., biscuits
barbecue
black-eyed peas
chicken, esp. fried
gravy
greens, esp. collard
grits
ham
pies
pork
potatoes
rice
sweet potatoes
tea: iced, sweet

SOUTHWESTERN CUISINE (AMERICAN)
avocados
beans
beef
cheese
chicken
chiles
chocolate
cilantro
coconut milk
cinnamon
corn
limes
nuts
onions
pork
rice
squash
tomatoes
tortillas

SOY SAUCE
Taste: salty
Weight: light
Volume: moderate–loud
Tips: Add at the end of the cooking process, or to finish a dish. Use in stir-fries.

basil
beef
broccoli
chicken
Chinese cuisine
coriander
fish: cooked, raw
garlic
ginger
honey
Japanese cuisine
Korean cuisine
lime juice
lobster, raw
marinades
meats
mirin
molasses
I add soy sauce to my onion soup because it gives it a meaty flavor. I use so much soy sauce at home my kid is starting to look Asian!
— MICHEL RICHARD, CITRONELLE (WASHINGTON, DC)

White soy sauce is something I fell in love with while cooking in Japan for two years. It is like liquid smoke. It is not really soy sauce, but more of a brewed wheat product. It has a smoky quality, too, but it is still so light you can use it on hamachi with sesame seeds and olive oil.
— MICHAEL ANTHONY, GRAMERCY TAVERN (NEW YORK CITY)

White soy sauce is lighter on the palate and has a cleaner, more direct flavor than regular soy sauce. Regular soy sauce has a touch of caramel for color, flavor, and body, which makes it more a part of the dish rather than simply enhancing the ingredient. White soy sauce will let the ingredient sing. It is very pale, and if you make a ponzu sauce with mirin and rice wine vinegar, you'll get something almost clear.
— BRAD FARMERIE, PUBLIC (NEW YORK CITY)

orange zest
peanuts
red pepper flakes
salt
scallions
seafood
sesame oil
sugar
wasabi

Flavor Affinities
soy sauce + coriander + honey
soy sauce + garlic + ginger
soy sauce + molasses + sugar

SPANISH CUISINE
almonds
anchovies
bay leaf
bread
chorizo
custards
eggs
fish
fruits
garlic
ham, Serrano
hazelnuts
lemon
meats, esp. roasted

olive oil
olives
onion
orange
paprika, sweet
parsley
peppers, esp. guindilla or piquillo, esp. roasted
pine nuts
pomegranates
pork
rice
roasts
saffron
shellfish
sherry
soups
stews
thyme
tomatoes
vanilla
vegetables
vinegar, sherry
walnuts

Flavor Affinities
almonds + garlic + olive oil
almonds + olive oil
garlic + olive oil
garlic + onions + paprika + rice + saffron
garlic + onions + parsley
red peppers + onions + tomatoes
tomatoes + almonds + olive oil + roasted red peppers

Dishes
Hearts of Romaine and Treviso Radicchio with Spanish Serrano Ham, Manchego Cheese, and White Anchovies, Fire-Roasted Peppers, and Crisp Capers
— Carrie Nahabedian, Naha (Chicago)

Petite Red Oak Lettuce Salad with Manchego Cheese, Cinnamon Almonds, and Aged Sherry Vinaigrette
— Celina Tio, American Restaurant (Kansas City)
Spain in the New World:
How American Chefs Are Influenced by Spain

Sweet Potato, Feta, and Smoked Paprika Tortilla with Minted Lemon Raita: We looked at Spain and the tortilla as the starting point for this dish. A traditional tortilla is made all together in one pan, but we played with that a little. We roast our sweet potatoes first with spicy-smoky paprika that tempers the sweetness with the heat and aromatic smokiness. We add feta cheese for the salt factor and caramelized onion for another layer of flavor. We then mix up a bunch of eggs, combine everything together, and cook it tortilla-style in a hot pan with a lot of olive oil on the stove and then in the oven to finish cooking. When we serve it, we cut it tortilla-style in a wedge and serve it at room temperature. The idea of eggs and potatoes always feels a bit heavy, which is why there is a zesty yogurt on the plate along with a crunchy watercress salad.

— BRAD FARMERIE, PUBLIC (NEW YORK CITY)

Hearts of Romaine and Treviso Radicchio with Spanish Serrano Ham, Manchego Cheese and White Anchovies, Fire-Roasted Peppers and Crisp Capers: This dish is an homage to Guillermo, who supplies our Spanish products. His anchovies are so good that if someone asks for them on the side, the waiter just replies, “Trust me . . .” The reason there is radicchio on the salad is because I like to change people’s opinions of ingredients that have been wronged. When it is added to this salad, it is so good you can’t believe it. It adds a wonderful crunch and balances the romaine and other flavors. I add the fried capers to add some acidity and crunch.

— CARRIE NAHABEDIAN, NAHA (CHICAGO)

In Spain, eggs aren’t eaten for breakfast; they are more for dinner. The Spanish also don’t eat brunch, but at Tia Pol, brunch is a way to celebrate the Spanish egg cookery that is a huge part of their diet. The Spanish cook eggs beautifully and in a huge variety. In the Basque country, they really value a soft scrambled egg with a great ingredient in it — whether tiny mushrooms, asparagus, or baby pink shrimp. The Spanish also cook eggs in olive oil. When we serve a fried egg, we cook it in so much oil it is almost deep-fried; instead of using a spatula, we use a spider [a weblike wire mesh strainer] to remove the egg from the pan.

— ALEXANDRA RAIJ, TÍA POL (NEW YORK CITY)

We use olive oil as a condiment. In Spain it is not uncommon to see something swimming in olive oil. Anchovies will be covered in oil, and after you eat the anchovies you just dip your bread in the oil. Even a dish that is cooked in olive oil will get a drizzle of raw oil on top for finishing. In Spanish cooking it is hard for me to name a dish that doesn’t get olive oil. We will cook mushrooms in olive oil and serve them with oil on top.

Sautéed vegetables in Spain may get cooked in a little pork fat and then served with diced ham on top. The Spanish also like to braise vegetables, and will add a ham end similar to a trotter [pig’s foot] during the cooking. Any pot of stew or beans, such as garbanzos, will get ham added to it as well. What the ham end adds to what is being cooked is a little funky flavor but in a good way — like the flavor mold adds to a cheese.

— ALEXANDRA RAIJ, TÍA POL (NEW YORK CITY)
SPICES (See also individual spices)

Just a pinch of spices such as fennel, coriander, cumin, and cayenne is great for finishing a sauce. Cayenne is great if you want to raise the heat level. You want to use only a pinch so that you don’t even know it is there. If you are making a French lemon sauce with beurre blanc, lemon puree, and diced lemon zest, adding a pinch of cayenne will bring up the flavor without making it spicy.
— ANDREW CARMELLINI, A VOCE (NEW YORK CITY)

I am sure every kitchen has its own pepper mix that is not just pepper. We have a mix that is specific for meat and occasionally for pork or tuna. It is a combination of black peppercorns, pink peppercorns, coriander seeds, and toasted ground star anise. The other thing I always have next to me is a tray we call “the four seasons”: fleur de sel; red pepper flakes — the ultimate marriage of heat and fruit; dry mustard, which I use all the time; and sumac, for an acidic component.
— SHARON HAGE, YORK STREET (DALLAS)

To counteract overspicing, you need to increase the quantity of whatever you are making. This is a case where you might want to add a puree of something, or add some sweetness because sweetness balances spice. With an Indian curry that is too powerful, you could puree some dried apricot into it. The apricot puree adds sweetness, binds the sauce, and increases the overall quantity.
— ANDREW CARMELLINI, A VOCE (NEW YORK CITY)

SPINACH (See also Greens — In General)

Season: year-round
Taste: bitter
Function: cooling
Weight: medium
Volume: moderate
Techniques: boil, raw, sauté, steam, stir-fry, wilt

almonds
anchovies
apples
bacon
basil
*BUTTER, unsalted
cayenne
chard
CHEESE: aged, Comté,

Emmental, feta, goat, Parmesan, ricotta
chicken, esp. grilled
chickpeas
chives
crab
CREAM / MILK
cream cheese
crème fraîche
cumin
curry
dill
eggs, esp. hard-boiled
fennel
fish (e.g., striped bass)
French cuisine
GARLIC
ginger
greens, collard

Indian cuisine
Italian cuisine
Japanese cuisine
lamb, esp. grilled
lemon, juice
lentils
lovage
marjoram
mascarpone
mint, esp. spearmint
mushrooms, esp. shiitake
mustard, Dijon
mustard seeds
NUTMEG
OIL: canola, peanut, sesame, vegetable, walnut
olive oil
onions, esp. sweet
pancetta
paprika, sweet
parsley
pasta
pecans
PEPPER: black, white
pesto
pine nuts
potatoes
prosciutto
quince
raisins
red pepper flakes
saffron
SALT: kosher, sea
salt cod
sauces: béchamel, Mornay
scallions
SESAME SEEDS
shallots
shrimp
smoked salmon
sorrel
sour cream
soy sauce
stocks: chicken, vegetable
sugar (pinch)
Tabasco sauce
thyme, fresh
tomatoes
I love spinach. It is best sautéed in a little oil, because if you blanch it, it tends to lose its flavor [to the blanching water]. I like to add some garlic to it, and from there you can go almost anywhere. Sautéed spinach is delicious with a poached egg.
— GABRIEL KREUTHER, THE MODERN (NEW YORK CITY)

**Spinach** and bacon is simply a great combination. The key to our creamed spinach is that we steam our fresh-leaf spinach just until it wilts, then drain it and chop it slightly. [In a pan,] we start with a little butter and flour to thicken, then add cream, nutmeg, and an onion piqué [an onion spiked with cloves], and reduce the cream by half. Then we add the barely cooked spinach to the cream and heat them together briefly so just a little juice infiltrates the cream. You end up with velvety spinach, which we top with [chunks of] Nueske’s bacon, which is an applewood-smoked bacon from the Midwest.
— MICHAEL LOMONACO, PORTER HOUSE NEW YORK (NEW YORK CITY)

Our warm mushroom and baby spinach salad with black bean sauce works so well because of the garlic, which is the last thing added to the dish. Too often, garlic is overpowering. You want to add just enough.
— KAZ OKOCHI, KAZ SUSHI BISTRO (WASHINGTON, DC)

tuna
vinaigrette, esp. sherry
VINEGAR: balsamic, cider, red
wine, rice wine, sherry
walnuts
yogurt

**Flavor Affinities**

spinach + bacon + garlic + onions + cider vinegar
spinach + bacon + walnuts
spinach + chives + goat cheese + mascarpone
spinach + cumin + garlic + lemon + yogurt
spinach + fennel + Parmesan cheese + portobello mushrooms + balsamic vinegar
spinach + feta cheese + lemon juice + oregano
spinach + garlic + mushrooms
spinach + garlic + sorrel

---

**Weather**: typically warm

**Techniques**: pan roast and other stove-top methods

**artichokes** (peak: March–April)
**asparagus**: green, purple, white (peak: April)
beans, fava (peak: April–June)
cauliflower (peak: March)
crayfish
dandelion greens (peak: May–June)
fiddlehead ferns
garlic, green (peak: March)
greens: salad, spring
lamb, spring
leeks
lemons, Meyer
lettuces
lighter dishes
limes, key
loquats
mushrooms, morel (peak: April)
onions: spring, Vidalia (peak: May)
oranges, navel (peak: March)
peas (peak: May)
ramps (peak: May)
rhubarb (peak: April)
soft-shell crabs
sorrel (peak: May)
soufflés
spices, cooling (e.g., white peppercorns)
strawberries
tomatoes, heirloom
watercress
zucchini blossoms

**Spring** is when people are looking for all the young salads that they have been missing all winter. I really look forward to asparagus that I will serve simply with mayonnaise or a mousseline.
— GABRIEL KREUTHER, THE MODERN (NEW YORK CITY)
Spring is when everyone's moods start to lighten. It may be cold, but people are looking for lighter things. This is rhubarb and strawberry season. Citrus plays a bigger role; in the winter, it is an alternative to chocolate, but in the spring, it is the lighter and more aromatic option.
— EMILY LUCHETTI, FARALLON
(SAN FRANCISCO)

Spring lamb is one of the quintessential dishes of spring.
— MICHEL RICHARD, CITRONELLE
(WASHINGTON, DC)

### SPROUTS

**Season:** year-round  
**Function:** cooling  
**Weight:** light  
**Volume:** quiet  
**Techniques:** sauté, steam, stir-fry  
**Tips:** Cook for less than 30 seconds, or they'll wilt.

- cucumbers  
- egg salad  
- salads, esp. more delicate sprouts  
- sandwiches  
- stir-fried dishes, esp. heartier sprouts

### SQUAB

**Weight:** medium  
**Volume:** moderate  
**Techniques:** braise, broil, grill, roast, sauté

- allspice  
- bay leaf  
- butter, esp. brown  
- cheese, Parmesan  
- cinnamon  
- cream  
- eggs, custard  
- garlic  
- ginger, fresh  
- maple syrup  
- mascarpone  
- mushrooms, esp. shiitake  
- nutmeg  
- nuts  
- olive oil  
- onions, esp. cipollini  
- parsley  
- pork  
- SAGE  
- salt, kosher  
- sugar, brown  
- thyme  
- vanilla  
- vinegar, sherry

### Flavor Affinities

- acorn squash + custard + sage  
- acorn squash + ginger + maple syrup

---

**Dishes**

**Squab, Watermelon, Foie Gras, and Black Licorice**  
— Grant Achatz, Alinea (Chicago)

**Barbecued Squab with Roasted Beet “Farotto” and Porcini Mustard**  
— Mario Batali, Babbo (New York City)

You may be thinking about licorice but don't want a licorice sauce. So you may simply just grate some fennel over squab and you get this great aroma and when you take a bite you'll taste this root beer–Pernod flavor that is not overbearing that will still work with squab, foie gras, medjool dates, and green peppercorns. Some flavors are meant to be just a soft accent on a dish. I like to think of them as "eye shadow"!
— CARRIE NAHABEDIAN, NAHA (CHICAGO)
I find butternut to be the best squash. It is nutty, sweet, and has a balanced flavor to it.
— DANIEL HUMM, ELEVEN MADISON PARK (NEW YORK CITY)

In winter, one of my favorite combinations is butternut squash with bay leaf and nutmeg.
— JERRY TRAUNFELD, THE HERBFARM (WOODINVILLE, WASHINGTON)

**SQUASH, BUTTERNUT**
(See also Pumpkin; Squash, Acorn; and Squash, Winter)
**Season:** early autumn
**Taste:** sweet
**Weight:** medium–heavy
**Volume:** moderate
**Techniques:** bake, braise, mash, roast, steam, tempura-fry

- allspice
- anchovies
- apples, esp. green
- artichokes, Jerusalem
- bacon
- basil
- bay leaf
- bourbon
- bread crumbs
- brown butter

**BUTTER, UNSALTED**
- carrots
- cayenne
- celery
- celery root

**CHEESE:** Fontina, goat, Gruyère, **PARMESAN,** pecorino, **ricotta,** ricotta salata

- chervil
- chestnuts
- chickpeas
- chile peppers, esp. fresh green, jalapeño
- chili sauce
- chives
- cilantro
- **cinnamon**
- cloves
- coconut milk
- coriander
- couscous
- **cream**
- crème fraîche
- cumin
- curry, paste (yellow), powder
- duck
- fenugreek
- fish sauce, Thai
- garlic
- ginger: fresh, ground
- honey
- Japanese cuisine (e.g., tempura)
- leeks
- lemon, juice
- lemongrass
- lime, juice

maple syrup
marjoram
mascarpone
mint
Moroccan cuisine
mushrooms, esp. porcini
nutmeg
nuta
OIL: canola, grapeseed, peanut, pumpkin seed, vegetable
olive oil
ONIONS, esp. red
orange, juice
pancetta
parsley, flat-leaf
parsnips
pears
PEPPER: black, white
pork
potatoes
pumpkin seeds
red pepper flakes
risotto
rosemary
SAGE
salsify
SALT: kosher, sea
shallots
shrimp
soups
sour cream
spinach
STOCKS: chicken, vegetable
sugar: brown, white
tarragon
thyme
truffle oil
vanilla
vinegar: balsamic, champagne, sherry
walnuts
watercress
wine: dry white, Vin Santo yams
yogurt
**Flavor Affinities**

- butternut squash + anchovies + bread crumbs + onions + pasta
- butternut squash + bacon + maple syrup + sage
- butternut squash + bay leaf + nutmeg
- butternut squash + cilantro + coconut + ginger
- butternut squash + crème fraîche + nutmeg + sage
- butternut squash + ricotta cheese + rosemary
- butternut squash + risotto + sage

---

**SQUASH, SUMMER**

*(See also Zucchini)*

**Season:** summer  
**Weight:** light–medium  
**Volume:** quiet–moderate  
**Techniques:** bake, blanch, boil, braise, deep-fry, grill, sauté, steam, stir-fry

- basil  
- bell peppers  
- butter  
- cheese: goat, Gruyère, mozzarella, Parmesan  
- chile peppers: dried red, fresh green  
- chives  
- cinnamon  
- coconut  
- coriander  
- corn  
- cream  
- cumin  
- curry leaves  
- dill  
- eggplant  
- garlic  
- lemon, juice  
- marjoram  
- mint  
- mustard seeds, black  
- olive oil  
- onions  
- oregano  
- parsley, flat-leaf  
- pecans  
- pepper, black  
- rosemary  
- sage  
- salt  
- sausage, Italian  
- thyme  
- tomatoes  
- turmeric  
- walnuts  
- yogurt

---

**SQUASH, WINTER**

*(See also Pumpkin; Squash, Acorn; and Squash, Butternut)*

**Season:** autumn–winter  
**Weight:** medium–heavy  
**Volume:** moderate  
**Techniques:** bake, braise, grill, mash, puree, roast, sauté, steam

- allspice  
- Apples: cider, fruit, juice  
- bacon  
- butter  
- caraway seeds  
- cayenne  
- celery, leaves  
- cheese: Fontina, Gruyère, Parmesan, pecorino, Romano  
- chili powder  
- cinnamon  
- cloves  
- coconut milk  
- coriander  
- cream  
- cumin

---

**Dishes**

*Red Curry Squash Flan, Orange Jelly, Coconut Emulsion, Sweet Gnocchi, and Curry Gel*  
— Dominique and Cindy Duby, Wild Sweets (Vancouver)

*Roasted Squash Ice Cream, Crispy Pumpkin Seeds, Sage*  
— Johnny Iuzzini, pastry chef, Jean Georges (New York City)
When winter squash is at its peak, it is already sweet, and yet the tendency is to want to reach for the cinnamon or maple syrup to season it. To keep it a savory dish, I'll reach for fresh ginger, which adds a sweet heat.

— BRADFORD THOMPSON, MARY ELAINE'S AT THE PHOENICIAN (SCOTTSDALE, ARIZONA)

Flavor Affinities

winter squash + butter + garlic + sage
winter squash + garlic + olive oil + parsley
winter squash + onions + Parmesan cheese + chicken stock

SQUASH BLOSSOMS

(See Zucchini Blossoms)

SQUID (aka calamari)

Weight: light–medium
Volume: quiet
Techniques: deep-fry, grill, marinate, roast, salad, sauté, stew

aioli
almonds
anchovies
arugula
basil
bay leaf
beans, white
bell peppers: green, red, yellow
butter, unsalted
cabbage: green, red
caperberries
capers
carrots
cayenne
celery
chard
chile peppers, esp. piquillo
chives

Dishes

Grilled Squid with Tapioca and Meyer Lemon

— Charlie Trotter, Charlie Trotter's (Chicago)
sugar
rabasco sauce
tarragon
tomatoes
wine, sherry, white wine
walnuts
wine, dry white
yuzu juice
zucchini

**Flavor Affinities**

squid + aioli + anchovies
squid + basil + bell peppers +
  chiles + garlic + orange +
  tomatoes + red wine
squid + garlic + lemon + parsley

**STAR ANISE (See Anise, Star)**

**STEAK (See Beef)**

**STRAWBERRIES**

**Season:** late spring–summer

**Taste:** sweet–sour

**Weight:** light

**Volume:** moderate

**Techniques:** raw, sauté

**Tips:** Adding sugar enhances
  strawberry flavor, as does adding
  an acid such as citrus juice or
  vinegar.

almonds
amaretto
apricots, pureed
bananas
berries
biscuit
blackberries

---

**Dishes**

- **Strawberries in Chianti with Black Pepper Ricotta Cream**
  — Gina DePalma, pastry chef, Babbo (New York City)

- **Fresh Strawberry Tart with Orange Curd and Moscato Gelee**
  — Lissa Doumani, Terra (St. Helena, California)

- **Citrus-Strawberry Salad, Honey Parfait, and Charentais Melon Puree**
  — Michael Laiskonis, Le Bernardin (New York City)

- **Strawberry, Mango, and Basil “Ice Cream Sandwich” and Organic Strawberry Juice**
  — Michael Laiskonis, Le Bernardin (New York City)

- **Strawberry-Rhubarb Shortcake with Crème Fraîche Ice Cream**
  — Patrick O’Connell, The Inn at Little Washington (Washington, Virginia)

---

**blueberries**

- **Champagne**
  - Chartreuse
  - cheese: Queso de los Beyos, ricotta
  - chocolate: dark, white
  - cinnamon

I remember asking myself, How can I make a salad into a dessert? The result of my experimentation bore no resemblance to a salad: I used olive oil to make an almond financier; because a financier is not a financier without the brown butter, I substituted olive oil for half the brown butter. I served this with a balsamic vinegar ice cream, and a basil-infused strawberry consommé.

A note about the strawberries is that I cooked them on very low heat. It comes from the idea of gentleness, slowness, care, respect for the ingredients, and, in the end, a better-tasting fresh ingredient. I could have extracted more juice from the strawberries by bringing them up to a boil with a bunch of sugar, but that results in cooked strawberries and not the fresh strawberry flavor you're after.

— **MICHAEL LAISKONIS, LE BERNARDIN (NEW YORK CITY)**

A tiny bit of vanilla makes strawberries yummy! It has to be just a little because you don't want a vanilla-strawberry dessert; you want a strawberry dessert that has a little vanilla on the palate that people have to search for.

— **GINA DEPALMA, BABBO (NEW YORK CITY)**

You still can't go wrong with a classic. For years I tried to come up with the end-all be-all strawberry dessert. Four years ago, I said forget it — the strawberries I get from my purveyor in the farmers’ market are perfect. Now, I serve strawberry gelato with lots of strawberries and 25-year-old balsamic vinegar. It became an injustice to try to do anything else with the perfect strawberries I was getting.

— **GINA DEPALMA, BABBO (NEW YORK CITY)**
Strawberries pair beautifully with Cabernet Sauvignon, and black pepper takes the combination even further.
— LISSA DOUMANI, TERRA (ST. HELENA, CALIFORNIA)

When I taste strawberries at the store I close my eyes and ask, Is this a (perfect) strawberry or does this need a little help? If they are a little dry, to help them, you cook them on top of the stove a little and that will release their perfume and juice. You can add Grand Marnier or Kirsch, which will help their flavor as well. If you follow these steps, though, this will lead you to wanting to serve them warm. If you chill them down, they will not look great. So I would serve a warm berry compote over vanilla ice cream. If you have some berries that aren't perfect, with a little love and attention they'll adapt. In spring, when the strawberries are early and not that good, I'll roast them in the oven with red wine, balsamic vinegar, sugar, corn syrup, and water, and they turn wonderfully jammy.
— EMILY LUCHETTI, FARALLON (SAN FRANCISCO)

I love fresh strawberries with dense and dry cow's milk cheeses, such as Queso de los Beyos from Spain. It hits your tongue like dry plaster, then melts, releasing its slightly sour fresh milk flavor. Both also go very well with rosé Champagne.
— ADRIAN MURCIA, CHANTERELLE (NEW YORK CITY)

Strawberries have a rose note to them so I find rose geraniums bring that out. The two have similar flavors.
— JERRY TRAUNFELD, THE HERBFARM (WOODINVILLE, WASHINGTON)
We rely a lot on sumac, which I love because it is a good way to add another layer of tartness and acidity to a dish without having to add liquid. I could not imagine our beet salad without it. Sumac works well with chicken, vegetables, and salads, as well as in a vinaigrette or with cheeses you might marinate like feta. I avoid it with red meat or steak; I think it is the wrong kind of tartness for them.

— SHARON HAGE, YORK STREET (DALLAS)

Sumac’s distinctly sour flavor and reddish-purple color can both lift a dish.

— LISSA DOUMANI, TERRA (ST. HELENA, CALIFORNIA)

If my mind is in the Middle East, I will be reaching for sumac or preserved lemon or yogurt. I use sumac at the very end of the cooking process to enhance the acid already being used in the dish.

— BRAD FARMERIE, PUBLIC (NEW YORK CITY)
chickpeas  
chile peppers  
chili powder  
coriander  
cucumbers  
cumin  
eggplant  
fennel  

**FISH, ESP. GRILLED**  
garlic  
ginger  
kebabs  
lamb  

Lebanese cuisine  
lemon, juice  
lentils  
lime  
meats, esp. grilled  
Middle Eastern cuisine  
mint  
Moroccan cuisine  
onions  
orange  
oregano  
paprika  
parsley  
pepper, black  
pine nuts  
pomegranates  
rosemary  

**salads and salad dressings**  
salt  
seafood  
sesame seeds  
shellfish  
stewed dishes  
thyme  
tomatoes  
Turkish cuisine  
vegetables  
walnuts  
yogurt  

_Flavoir Affinities_  
sumac + lamb + black pepper  
sumac + salt + sesame seeds + thyme  
(aka Middle Eastern za'atar)  

My favorite fruit to work with is a toss-up between all of the stone fruits [i.e., cherries, plums, apricots, nectarines, and peaches]. Late July, August, and September is my favorite time of year!  
— **GINA DEPALMA**, **BABBO** (NEW YORK CITY)  

When I compose a dish, I work with the season — but like to play with that as well. People will ask how we can have braised short ribs on the menu in _summer_. I can, because I play with the other elements of the dish. For example, I pair seared watermelon with my short ribs for a refreshing note. From this base, I add other elements to lighten the dish further. The dish also has watermelon radishes that are bright green on the outside and red on the inside so you get another take on “watermelon on watermelon.” The radish also adds a little heat and freshness to cut the richness of the short ribs. The last note in the dish is feta cheese, which adds overall creaminess and goes back to the combination of watermelon and feta that you see in Greek restaurants.  
— **KATSUYA FUKUSHIMA**, **MINIBAR** (WASHINGTON, DC)  

What I like about working with the seasons is that everything that is in season at the same time works together. During the _summer_ when you have tomatoes, melon, and basil, you can make a dish with them and it will work. [His menu includes a salad of grilled watermelon with tomatoes, basil, and aged balsamic.] I don't try to create new combinations of ingredients. I saw the combination of tomatoes and basil everywhere I ever worked. Should I do something different with tomatoes? No — why? The reason everyone serves this combination is because it is amazing! My approach is to find a new way to serve the tomatoes or the basil. I may make a tomato gazpacho and serve it with basil sorbet, or I could serve different preparations of tomatoes on the plate — fresh, a confit, a juice — and then do the same with the basil, serving it as an oil or a puree.  
— **DANIEL HUMM**, **ELEVEN MADISON PARK** (NEW YORK CITY)  

Look at the weather and the occasion. You want your dessert to match the style and appropriateness of the meal. If it is a barbecue in the _summer_, I would serve a fruit crisp or pie, summer pudding, or ice cream, and that is pretty much it. People always talk about using fresh and local ingredients, which is very important. But, if you are using chocolate, which is available year-round, and if it is 85 degrees out with 85 percent humidity, the last thing you want is a hot chocolate soufflé. You want chocolate ice cream instead.  
— **EMILY LUCHETTI**, **FARALLON** (SAN FRANCISCO)  

_Summer_ vegetables work with summer herbs. In the Northwest, you will see the same set of ingredients in season in the same week every year. So, you just put them together. For example, sockeye salmon comes into season [during the _summer_] when squash does, and so do the herbs used in a fines herbes mixture. There's your dish!  
— **JERRY TRAUNFELD**, **THE HERBFARM** (WOODINVILLE, WASHINGTON)
SUMMER
Weather: typically hot
Techniques: barbecue, grill, marinate, panfry, pan roast, raw

apricots (peak: June)
basil
beans, fava
beans, green (peak: August)
blackberries (peak: June)
blueberries (peak: July)
boysenberries (peak: June)
cherries
chilled dishes and beverages
corn (peak: July/August)
cucumbers (peak: August)
eggplant
figs (peak: August)
fish

flowers, edible
garlic (peak: August)
grapes
grilled dishes
herbs, cooling (e.g., basil, cilantro, dill, fennel, licorice, marjoram, mint)

ice cream
ices
limes (peak: June)
mangoes

melons (peak: August)
nectarines (peak: July)
okra (peak: August)
onions (peak: August)
onions, red (peak: July)
peaches (peak: July/August)
pears, Bartlett (peak: August)
peppers

picnics
plums (peak: August)
puddings, summer
raspberries (peak: June, August)
raw foods (e.g., salads)
salads: fruit, green, pasta
salsas, fresh
shellfish
sorbets
soups, cold
spices, cooling (e.g., peppercorns, white; turmeric, etc.)
squash, summer
steaming
strawberries
tomatillos (peak: August)
tomatoes
vegetables, green leafy
Vidalia onions (peak: June)
watermelon  
zucchini (peak: July)

**SUNCHOKES** (See Artichokes, Jerusalem)

**SWEDISH CUISINE**
allspice  
bay leaf  
cardamom  
cinnamon  
cloves  
DILL  
fish  
ginger  
herring, pickled  
meatballs  
mushrooms  
mustard  
nutmeg  
onions  
peas  
pepper  
pickled dishes (e.g., fish, meat, vegetables)  
potatoes  
shellfish  
soups, esp. fruit  
sugar

**AVOID**
garlic  
piquancy

**Flavor Affinities**
beef + bay leaf + dill + nutmeg + onions  
herring + sour cream + vinegar  
red wine + allspice + cinnamon + cloves + raisins + sugar  
veal + allspice + onions

**SWEETBREADS**

**Weight:** medium  
**Volume:** moderate  
**Techniques:** braise, deep-fry, grill, pan roast, sauté

In the fall, I use walnut vinegar which is red wine vinegar with macerated walnuts in it. It is great on a **sweetbread** and hazelnut dish.  
— ANDREW CARMELLINI, A VOCE (NEW YORK CITY)

**Dishes**
Sweetbreads, Cauliflower, Burnt Bread, and Toasted Hay
— Grant Achatz, Alinea (Chicago)

artichokes, Jerusalem  
asparagus  
BACON  
butter, unsalted  
cabbage  
capers  
celery  
celery root  
cream  
fennel  
fennel seeds  
flour (for dredging)  
French cuisine  
garlic  
greens  
ham  
hazelnuts  
honey  
Italian cuisine  
lemon, juice  
liver, esp. duck  
Madeira  
mushrooms, esp. wild (e.g., chanterelles, morels)  
mustard  
oil, peanut  
olive oil  
onions: red, white  
parsley, flat-leaf  
peas  
pecans  
PEPPER: black, white  
port  
raisins  
salt: kosher, sea  
scallions  
shallots  
soy sauce  
spinach  
stock, chicken  
sugar  
thyme, fresh  
truffles, black  
vermouth  
VINEGAR: balsamic, red, rice, sherry, white  
wine, white

**Flavor Affinities**
sweetbreads + asparagus + morels  
sweetbreads + bacon + capers  
sweetbreads + bacon + garlic  
sweetbreads + bacon + onions + sherry vinegar  
sweetbreads + capers + lemon  
sweetbreads + celery + truffles, black  
sweetbreads + hazelnuts + red wine vinegar + walnuts  
sweetbreads + Madeira  
sweetbreads + mustard + raisins

**SWEETNESS**
**Taste:** sweet  
**Function:** cooling; sweetness satiates the appetite  
**Tips:** The colder the food or drink, the less the perception of sweetness. Sweetness tends to round out flavors, while acidity sharpens them.

apple: cider, fruit, juice  
apricots  
bananas  
barley  
basil, sweet  
beans  
beets  
bell peppers: red, yellow  
brandies, fruit (e.g., Calvados)  
butter
At dessert time, you don’t have the same philosophy as you do at the beginning of the meal. You don’t want people coming back for more — you want to finish them off! Dessert is the easy course, because sweetness is easy and obvious. I don’t want big structure; the work is done. As long as the apple tastes like apple, you are there! A dessert is about manipulating the sugar in some way to bring out the best of the apple, chocolate, lemon, pecans, or whatever you are working with. From there, you want to balance the sugar with the fat to bring out the best of the star ingredient. I am not a pastry chef, so I try to stick to simple things, like chocolate pot de crème and lemon pudding. The key is that, though they may be simple, I always use very good ingredients.

— SHARON HAGE, YORK STREET (DALLAS)

I’m not such a fan of white sugar because it only adds sweetness and little sophistication. Maple, honey, or brown sugar add so much more. When making a baba in France, you use only sugar and water. I use molasses because it gives texture and sweetness. In France you use a lot of simple syrup. I like to use orange juice instead of water, and instead of using white sugar, I’ll use brown.

— MICHEL RICHARD, CITRONELLE (WASHINGTON, DC)

I love jaggery [the unrefined sugar used in India, also known as palm sugar] because it has a fermented flavor and provides more complexity. Dates can be a primary source of sweetness in a dessert instead of sugar, as can vegetables such as beets, carrots, parsnips, and corn, which all have an earthy sweetness. However, I don’t want to pound people over the head with a beet sorbet.

— MICHAEL LAISKONIS, LE BERNARDIN (NEW YORK CITY)

caramel
carrots
cherries, sweet
chestnuts
chocolate: dark, milk, white
clementines
cloves
cocoa, sweetened
coconut and coconut milk
corn
corn syrup
crab
cream
currants
daikon
dates
figs
fruits: dried, ripe
fruit juices
garlic, roasted
ginger, candied
grapes
guava
hoisin sauce
honey
jicama
ketchup
lentils
licorice
liqueurs, sweet
lobster
lotus root
lychee nuts
Madeira
mangoes
maple syrup

— MICHEL RICHARD, CITRONELLE (WASHINGTON, DC)

melons (e.g., cantaloupe, honeydew)
milk
mirin (Japanese sweetener)
molasses
nectarines
onions: cooked, sweet (e.g., Vidalia)
oranges, sweet (e.g., navel)
papaya
parsnips
passion fruits
peaches
pears
peas and sugar snap peas
persimmons
pimentos
pineapple
plantains, esp. ripe
plums, sweet
plum sauce
pomegranates
potatoes
prunes
pumpkin
raisins
raspberries
rice
roasted foods
sake
scallops, esp. bay
sherry, sweet (e.g., cream, oloroso)
shrimp
squash, winter (e.g., acorn, butternut)
strawberries
sugar: brown, palm, white
sweet potatoes
tangerines
tomatoes
vermouth, sweet
vinegar, balsamic
watermelon
wheat
wines, sweet
Dishes

Sweet Potato, Feta, and Smoked Paprika Tortilla with Minted Lemon Raita
— Brad Farmerie, Public (New York City)

Warm Sweet Potato Cake with Cranberries and Dates
— Johnny Iuzzini, pastry chef, Jean Georges (New York City)

Szechuan Peppercorn and Salt-Roasted Sweet Potato Skewers with Sweet-Hot Mustard Sauce
— Monica Pope, T’afia (Houston)

SWEET POTATOES

Season: autumn–winter
Taste: sweet
Weight: medium–heavy
Volume: moderate–loud
Techniques: bake, boil, deep-fry, fry, grill, mash, roast, sauté, steam

allspice
anise
apples and apple juice
bacon
bananas
basil
bay leaf
beans
bell peppers: green, red
bourbon
brandy
BUTTER, unsalted
caramel
cheeses
chestnuts
chile peppers
chives
chocolate, white
cilantro
CINNAMON
cloves
coconut
coriander
cranberries
cream
crème fraîche
cumin
curry powder
custards
dates
dill
duck
figs, dried
fruits and fruit juices
garlic
ginger
greens, bitter
ham
hazelnuts
honey
kale
ketchup
leeks
lemon: juice, zest
lime, juice
liqueurs: nut, orange
maple syrup
meats, esp. roasted
molasses
mushrooms, chanterelle
mustard, esp. Dijon
NUTMEG
oatmeal
oil: nut, peanut, sesame
olive oil
onions, esp. red
ORANGE: juice, zest
paprika, smoked
parsley, flat-leaf
peanuts
pears
pecans
pepper: black, white
persimmons
pineapple
pork
potatoes: new, red
poultry, esp. roasted
prosciutto
pumpkin
pumpkin seeds
raisins
red pepper flakes
rosemary
rum
sage
salt, kosher
sausage: andouille, chorizo
sesame seeds
sour cream
stock, chicken
SUGAR, BROWN
tarragon
thyme
tomatoes
vanilla
vinegar: balsamic, cider
walnuts
whiskey
wine, sweet
Worcestershire sauce
yogurt

Flavor Affinities
sweet potatoes + allspice +
cinnamon + ginger
sweet potatoes + apples + sage
sweet potatoes + bacon + onions + rosemary
sweet potatoes + chile peppers +
lemon zest
sweet potatoes + chorizo sausage +
orange
sweet potatoes + cilantro + lime juice
sweet potatoes + kale + prosciutto
sweet potatoes + maple syrup +
pecans
**SWISS CHARD** (See Chard)

**SWORDFISH**

**Season:** early summer–early autumn

**Weight:** heavy

**Volume:** quiet–moderate

**Techniques:** braise, broil, grill, poach, sauté, sear, steam, stir-fry

- apples, esp. Granny Smith
- bacon
- basil
- bay leaf
- beans, white
- bread crumbs
- butter
- capers
- caponata
- carrots
- cayenne
- celery
- chili powder
- cilantro
- coconut milk
- coriander
- cream
- cumin
- currants
- curry
- fennel
- garlic
- lemon: juice, zest
- lemon, preserved
- lemongrass
- lime: juice, leaf (kaffir), zest
- mint
- OIL, corn
- olive oil
- olives, esp. black
- onions, esp. pearl
- orange, juice
- oregano
- parsley, flat-leaf
- pepper: black, red
- pineapple
- pine nuts
- pistou
- potatoes
- red pepper flakes
- rosemary
- saffron
- salt: kosher, sea
- scallions
- shallots
- star anise
- stocks: chicken, fish, shrimp
- Tabasco sauce
- tomatoes and tomato sauce
- vinegar, balsamic
- wine, dry white

**SZECHUAN CUISINE**

*(See also Chinese Cuisine)*

**Volume:** loud

**Techniques:** braise, pickle, roast, simmer, steam, stir-fry

- bamboo shoots
- beef
- cabbage, Chinese
- chicken
- chile peppers
- chili paste
- duck
- garlic
- ginger
- meats, smoked
- peppers:
- pork
- quail
- salt
- scallions
- sesame:
- soy sauce
- squid
- star anise
- stir-fried dishes
- Tibetan cuisine

**Dishes**

Seared Swordfish with Lemon and Caper Shallot Dressing

— David Bouley, Bouley (New York City)

Swordfish with Eggplant Caviar and Teardrop Tomato Salad

— Gabriel Kreuther, The Modern (New York City)

**Flavor Affinities**

Szechuan pepper + ginger + star anise

**SZECHUAN PEPPER**

**Taste:** sour, hot, pungent

**Weight:** light–medium

**Volume:** loud

**Tips:** Add at the end of the cooking process.

- Asian cuisines
- beans, black
- chicken
- chile peppers
- Chinese cuisine
- curry powder
- duck
- five-spice powder (key ingredient)
- fried dishes
- fruits, citrus
- game
- game birds
- garlic
- ginger
- grilled dishes
- honey
- lemon
- lime
- meats, esp. fattier
- mushrooms
- onions
- orange
- peppercorns: black, green, white
- pork
- quail
- salt
- scallions
- sesame: oil, seeds
- soy sauce
- squid
- star anise
- stir-fried dishes
- Tibetan cuisine
**SWISS CHARD** (See Chard)

**SWORDFISH**

*Season:* early summer–early autumn

*Weight:* heavy

*Volume:* quiet–moderate

*Techniques:* braise, broil, grill, poach, sauté, sear, steam, stir-fry

apples, esp. Granny Smith

bacon

basil

bay leaf

beans, white

bread crumbs

butter

capers

caponata

carrots

cayenne

celery

chili powder

cilantro

coconut milk

coriander

cream

cumin

currants

curry

fennel

garlic

lemon: juice, zest

lemon, preserved

lemon grass

lime: juice, leaf (kaffir), zest

mint

Oil, corn

olive oil

olives, esp. black

onions, esp. pearl

orange, juice

oregano

parsley, flat-leaf

pepper: black, red

pineapple

pine nuts

pistou

poatoes

red pepper flakes

rosemary flakes

saffron

salt: kosher, sea

scallions

shallots

star anise

stocks: chicken, fish, shrimp

Tabasco sauce

tomatoes and tomato sauce

vinaigrette, balsamic

wine, dry white

**SZECHUAN CUISINE**

(See also Chinese Cuisine)

*Volume:* loud

*Techniques:* braise, pickle, roast, simmer, steam, stir-fry

bamboo shoots

beef

cabbage, Chinese

chicken

chile peppers

chili paste

duck

garlic

ginger

meats, smoked

peppers, black, green, white

pork

quail

salt

scallions

sesame: oil, seeds

soy sauce

squid

star anise

stir-fried dishes

Tibetan cuisine

**Flavor Affinities**

Szechuan pepper + ginger + star anise

---

**Dishes**

Seared Swordfish with Lemon and Caper Shallot Dressing

— David Bouley, Bouley (New York City)

Swordfish with Eggplant Caviar and Teardrop Tomato Salad

— Gabriel Kreuther, The Modern (New York City)
TAMARIND
Season: spring–early summer
Taste: sour
Weight: medium
Volume: moderate–loud
Tips: Add at the beginning of the cooking process.

African cuisine
allic
almonds
Asian cuisines
bananas
beans
beverages, esp. fruit
cabbage
cardamom
Central American cuisine
chicken
chickpeas
chile peppers, esp. Thai
chili powder
Chinese cuisine
chutneys
cilantro
cinnamon
cloves
coconut and coconut milk
coriander
cumin
curries, curry paste, curry powder
dates
duck
fennel seeds
fenugreek
fish
fish sauce
fruits
game
garlic
ginger
greens
honey
INDIAN CUISINE
Indonesian cuisine
Jamaican cuisine
lamb
Latin American cuisine
lentils
lime, juice
mangoes
marinades
meats
Middle Eastern cuisine
mint
mushrooms
mustard
oil, grapeseed
onions, red
orange
paprika
peaches
peanuts
pears
pepper, black
pineapple
pork
potatoes
poultry
rice
sauces
scallops
sea bass
shellfish
shrimp
Southeast Asian cuisine
soy sauce
star anise
stews
sugar: brown, palm, white
Thai basil
Thai cuisine
turmeric
vegetables
vinaigrette
Worcestershire sauce (key ingredient)
yogurt

Flavor Affinities
tamarind + chicken + yogurt

TANGERINES (see Oranges, Mandarin)

TARRAGON
Season: late spring–summer
Taste: sweet
Weight: light
Volume: loud
Tips: Add at the end of the cooking process.

acidic foods and flavors
(e.g., citrus)
anise
apples
apricots
artichokes
asparagus
basil (say some)
bass
bay leaf
beans, green
beef
beets
broccoli
capers
carrots
cauliflower
celery seeds
cheese, esp. goat, ricotta
chervil
*CHICKEN
chives
chocolate
corn
crab and crab cakes
cream
crème fraîche
dill
EGGS AND EGG DISHES
(e.g., omelets), egg salad
fennel bulb
fennel seeds
fines herbes (key ingredient)
FISH
French cuisine
game
game birds
garlic
grapefruit
greens, bitter
**TAMARIND**

**Season:** spring–early summer  
**Taste:** sour  
**Weight:** medium  
**Volume:** moderate–loud  
**Tips:** Add at the beginning of the cooking process.

African cuisine  
allspice  
almonds  
Asian cuisines  
bananas  
beans  
beverages, esp. fruit  
cabbage  
cardamom  
Central American cuisine  
chicken  
chickpeas  
chile peppers, esp. Thai  
chili powder  
Chinese cuisine  
chutneys  
cilantro  
cinnamon  
cloves  
coconut and coconut milk  
coriander  
cumin  
curries, curry paste, curry powder  
dates  
duck  
fennel seeds  
fenugreek  
fish  
fish sauce  
fruits  
game  
garlic  
ginger  
greens  
honey  

**INDIAN CUISINE**  
Indonesian cuisine  
Jamaican cuisine  
lamb  

Latin American cuisine  
lentils  
lime, juice  
mangoes  
marinades  
meats  
**Middle Eastern cuisine**  
mint  
mushrooms  
**mustard**  
oil, grapeseed  
onions, red  
orange  
paprika  
peaches  
peanuts  
pears  
pepper, black  
pineapple  
**pork**  
potatoes  
poultry  
**rice**  
sauces  
scallops  
sea bass  
shellfish  
shrimp  
soups  
Southeast Asian cuisine  
soy sauce  
**star anise**  
stews  
**sugar:** brown, palm, white  
Thai basil  
**Thai cuisine**  
turmeric  
vegetables  
vinaigrette  
Worcestershire sauce (key ingredient)  
yogurt  

**Flavor Affinities**  
tamarind + chicken + yogurt

---

**TARRAGON**

**Season:** late spring–summer  
**Taste:** sweet  
**Weight:** light  
**Volume:** loud  
**Tips:** Add at the end of the cooking process.

acidic foods and flavors  
(e.g., citrus)  
anise  
apples  
apricots  
artichokes  
asparagus  
basil (say some)  
bass  
bay leaf  
beans, green  
beef  
beets  
broccoli  
capers  
**carrots**  
cauliflower  
celery seeds  
cheese, esp. goat, ricotta  
chervil  
*CHICKEN*  
chives  
chocolate  
corn  
crab and crab cakes  
cream  
créme fraîche  
dill  

**EGGS AND EGG DISHES**  
(e.g., omelets), egg salad  
fennel bulb  
fennel seeds  
fines herbes (key ingredient)  

**FISH**  
French cuisine  
game  
game birds  
garlic  
grapefruit  
greens, bitter
The flavor of **tarragon** is fabulous. You get the flavor of Provence and of fennel...it is wonderful. I use it a lot, but you have to be careful. Most people chop tarragon too thin and it oxidizes before it goes into the dish. You want to just cut it into three pieces, and that's it. Chop, chop, chop — that's it. Otherwise, between the knife and the cutting board, it will oxidize and give the herb a bad taste.

— **MICHEL RICHARD**, CITRONELLE (WASHINGTON, DC)

I like **tarragon** when it is used in moderation. It is a fairly particular and strong herb, and for that reason it doesn't have the same applications as other herbs. It is good in a lot of things, such as with fish and chicken — and you can't make béarnaise without it!

— **DAVID WALTUCK**, CHANTERELLE (NEW YORK CITY)

**Tarragon** is my all-time favorite herb. I like the licorice flavor and the light perfume of the herb. This is an herb that marries well with other flavors. We serve a dish right now of flounder, white corn, and sugar snap peas with tarragon butter that is delicious.

— **MARCEL DESAULNIERS**, THE TRELLIS (WILLIAMSBURG, VIRGINIA)

**Tarragon** is best on its own [as opposed to combined with other herbs].... Tarragon works with muskmelon.

— **JERRY TRAUNFELD**, THE HERBFARM (WOODINVILLE, WASHINGTON)

---

**Flavor Affinities**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tarragon</th>
<th>+</th>
<th>Anise</th>
<th>Celery seeds</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>+</td>
<td>Chicken</td>
<td>Lemon</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>+</td>
<td>Orange</td>
<td>Seafood</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**TECHNIQUES**

We believe that food preparation is 60 percent ingredients and 40 percent technique.

— **DOMINIQUE AND CINDY DUBY**, WILD SWEETS (VANCOUVER)

I find it a bit of a nightmare to find quality fruit and vegetables in this country. I think that for this reason **technique** began to be the primary driving force for a new dish.

— **HESTON BLUMENTHAL**, THE FAT DUCK (ENGLAND)
TEQUILA
*Weight:* medium
*Volume:* moderate

chile peppers
cilantro
Cointreau
fruit juice
ginger
grenadine
lemon, juice
LIME, JUICE
MEXICAN CUISINE
orange, juice
pomegranate, juice
sage
salt
sugar
vermouth: dry, sweet

**Flavor Affinities**
tequila + cilantro + lime
tequila + Cointreau + lime juice +
pomegranate juice
tequila + Cointreau + lime juice +
sage
tequila + lime juice + salt

TEX-MEX CUISINE
(See Mexican Cuisine, Southwestern Cuisine)

THAI CUISINE
*Tips:* Authentic Thai cuisine strives for a balance of hot + sour + salty + sweet.

basil, Thai
bell peppers
CHILE PEPPERS
cilantro
coconut
coriander
cumin
curries
fish
fish sauce
garlic

**Flavor Affinities**
chile peppers + cilantro + coconut + milk
chile peppers + curry
chile peppers + curry + fish sauce
chile peppers + curry + peanuts
chile peppers + fish sauce
chile peppers + garlic
chile peppers + peanuts

THYME
*Season:* early summer
*Weight:* medium
*Volume:* moderate–loud
*Tips:* Add at the beginning of the cooking process; use dried or fresh.

allspice
apples
bacon
basil
BAY LEAF
beans, esp. dried, green
beef
beer
bell peppers
bouquet garni (key ingredient, along with bay leaf, marjoram, parsley)
braised dishes
bread and other baked goods
broccoli
Brussels sprouts
cabbage
caramel
carrots
casseroles
celery
CHEESE: FRESH, GOAT
CHICKEN, esp. roasted
chile peppers
chives
chowders, clam
cloves
cod
coriander
Thyme works well with so many things, especially soups and stews. I can't think of anything that it wouldn't work with if used properly. It is often a supporting-role herb and not the star; it is not an herb that hangs you over the head.
— David Waltuck, Chantrelle (New York City)

This is one of those cases where I remember the first time I ever tasted thyme. I'd ordered a cup of real clam chowder in Newport, Rhode Island, and found out that fresh thyme was the secret to it being the best I had tasted at the time. I still use thyme in my chowder to this day, though now I use dried thyme. You would have to use a considerable amount of fresh thyme to get the flavor of the dried.
— Marcel Desaulniers, The Trellis (Williamsburg, Virginia)

Thyme works well with citrus and honey.
— Gina DePalma, Babbo (New York City)

In Spanish cooking, thyme is used very lightly. You will just toss a sprig in something. You don't want it to be strong; it is just a note. I use it when making escabeche [marinated poached or fried fish] or when cooking beans.
— Alexandra Raj, Tía Pol (New York City)
miso
mushrooms
noodles, esp. soba, udon
rice, esp. fried
salads and salad dressings
scallions
sesame: oil, seeds
soups
soy sauce
tamari
teriyaki

**TOMATILLOS**

**Season:** year-round
**Taste:** sour
**Weight:** light–medium
**Volume:** moderate

- avocado
- chicken
- chile peppers, fresh
  (e.g., jalapeño, serrano)
- cilantro
- cucumber
- fish
- garlic
- grilled dishes
- guacamole
- lime
- Mexican cuisine
- onions
- pork
- salsas, esp. green
- salt: kosher, sea
- scallions
- shellfish
- shrimp
- sour cream
- stews
- tequila
- tomatoes

**TOMATOES**

**Season:** summer–early autumn
**Taste:** sour, sweet
**Function:** heating
**Weight:** medium
**Volume:** moderate

---

**Dishes**

**Warm Goat Cheese Salad: Vine-Ripe Tomatoes, Frisée, Watercress, and Almond Dressing**

— David Bouley, Upstairs (New York City)

**Heirloom Tomato Salad, Warm Brin d’Amore (Corsican Sheep’s Milk Cheese), Teammate Coulis, Raspberry Vinegar, Globe Basil**

— David Bouley, Upstairs (New York City)

**Cherry Tomatoes with Milk-Poached Buffalo Mozzarella, Country Ham, Jalapeño, Purple Basil, and Tomato Water**

— Jeffrey Buben, Vidalia (Washington, DC)

**Chilled Gazpacho with Cucumber Relish and Parsley Cream**

— Sanford D’Amato, Sanford (Milwaukee)

**Chilled Tomato Soup with Watermelon, Ginger Oil, Coconut Cream, and Basil**

— Katsuya Fukushima, minibar (Washington, DC)

**Summer Vegetable Bread Pudding with Warm Tomato Vinaigrette and Tomato-Basil Salad**

— Vitaly Paley, Paley’s Place (Portland, Oregon)

**Heirloom Tomato Salad with Crème Fraîche and Herbs**

— Alice Waters, Chez Panisse (Berkeley, California)
Tomatoes with watermelon is a simple, refreshing, and perfectly balanced combination. The acidity of the tomatoes is a counterpoint to the sweetness of the watermelon.
—JOSÉ ANDRÉS, CAFÉ ATLÁNTICO (WASHINGTON, DC)

A romesco sauce combines some of Spain's best-loved ingredients: tomatoes, peppers, onions, bread, and almonds.
—JOSÉ ANDRÉS, CAFÉ ATLÁNTICO (WASHINGTON, DC)

Stratu is a Sicilian tomato paste that I'm finishing many dishes with now. It is delicious and very sweet. It looks like red Silly Putty and comes in jars, and doesn't taste anything like canned tomato paste. I recently used it in a garlic aioli that we served with calamari. It gave the mayonnaise a wonderful color, sweetness, and depth of flavor.
—ANDREW CARMELLINI, A VOCE (NEW YORK CITY)

Gazpacho is awesome. As a restaurant chef, I can't just make gazpacho. I have to do something that you can't do at home, but that is interesting — and not in a weird way. We use the ingredients that you would find in gazpacho but instead of using only tomatoes, we will use 80 percent strawberries and 20 percent tomatoes. My gazpacho is made up of toasted country bread, cucumber, bell pepper, a little garlic, strawberries, tomatoes, olive oil, and white balsamic vinegar. The dish is then garnished with Hawaiian blue prawns, diced strawberries, and slices of guanciale (cured pork jowl), olive oil, basil, and black pepper.
—DANIEL HUMM, ELEVEN MADISON PARK (NEW YORK CITY)

My parents had a large garden with almost 120 tomato plants. I would go out in the garden and pick a tomato and eat it like an apple. I love heirloom tomato season. I like to serve them with a little salt and pepper, a drizzle of lemon juice or cider vinegar, and a piece of mozzarella cheese. You need to taste your tomatoes before you season them. Yellow tomatoes are pretty sweet, which is why I like to add a little vinegar.
—GABRIEL KREUTHER, THE MODERN (NEW YORK CITY)

Techniques: bake, broil, confit, fry, grill, raw, roast, sauté, stew

aioli
allspice
almonds
anchovies
arugula
avocados
*BASIL: lemon, purple
bay leaf
beans: fava, green

beets
BELL PEPPERS: red, green, yellow
bread, bread crumbs
broccoli
butter, unsalted
capers
carrots
cauliflower
cayenne
celery and celery salt
CHEESE: blue, Cabrales, cheddar,
mango
marjoram
mayonnaise
meats
Mediterranean cuisine
melon, esp. cantaloupe, honeydew
Mexican cuisine
mint, esp. spearmint
mushrooms
mustard, esp. whole grain
oil: grapeseed, vegetable
okra
OLIVE OIL
olives: black, niçoise
ONIONS, esp. pearl, red,
  Spanish, sweet, Vidalia, white, yellow
orange, juice
oregano
paprika, esp. sweet
parsley, flat-leaf
pasta and pasta sauces
peas
PEPPER: black, white
pineapple
pizza
port
raspberries
red pepper flakes
rice
rosemary
saffron
sage
salads, green
SALT: fleur de sel, kosher, sea
sandwiches
sauces
shallots
shellfish
soups
Spanish cuisine
squash
stews
stocks / broths: beef, chicken,
  vegetable
strawberries
sugar (pinch)

Tabasco sauce
tarragon
THYME
tomato paste
veal
vinaigrettes
VINEGAR: balsamic, raspberry,
  red wine, rice, sherry, tarragon,
  white, wine
watermelon
wine: red, rosé, vermouth, white
yogurt
zucchini

Flavor Affinities
tomatoes + avocado + basil + crab
tomatoes + avocado + lemon
tomatoes + basil + chervil + garlic + tarragon
tomatoes + basil + goat cheese
tomatoes + basil + mozzarella cheese + garlic + olive oil + balsamic vinegar
tomatoes + basil + olive oil + orange juice + prosciutto + watermelon
tomatoes + basil + oregano + thyme
tomatoes + basil + ricotta cheese
tomatoes + chile peppers + garlic + onions
tomatoes + fennel + Gorgonzola cheese
tomatoes + garlic chives + lemon basil
tomatoes + horseradish + lemon
tomatoes + olive oil + balsamic vinegar

TROUT
Season: midsummer
Weight: medium
Volume: moderate–loud
Techniques: bake, broil, grill,
  pan fry, pan roast, poach, roast,
  sauté, steam

almonds
anchovies
apples: cider, fruit
bacon
bay leaf
beans, green
bell peppers, esp. red
bread crumbs
brown butter sauce
butter, unsalted
capers
carrots
cayenne
celery
cheese: manchego, Parmesan
chili powder
corn
crayfish
cream
escarole
fines herbes
garlic
ham, esp. Serrano
leeks
lemon, juice
lentils
mint
mushrooms
oil: canola, peanut
olive oil
onions
oregano
parsley
pine nuts
parsley, flat-leaf
pepper: black, white
potatoes
sage
salt, kosher
sauces, béarnaise
shallots
stock, mushroom
thyme
tomatoes
vinegar, esp. sherry, wine
wine: dry red, white

**Flavor Affinities**
trout + bacon + lentils + sherry
  - vinegar
trout + capers + lemon

---

**Dishes**

Pan-Roasted Trout with Almonds, Brown Butter, and Haricots Verts
— Thomas Keller, Bouchon (Yountville, California)

Smoked Trout with Purslane Salad
— Mario Batali, Babbo (New York City)

---

**TROUT, SMOKED**

**Taste:** salty
**Weight:** medium
**Volume:** loud

apples
beans, green
bell pepper, roasted red
cayenne
chives
corn
cream
crème fraîche
dill
greens, baby
horseradish
lemon, juice
marjoram
nutmeg
olive oil
pepper: black, white
purslane
radishes
salt, sea
sour cream
walnut oil
wine, white (e.g., Riesling)

**Flavor Affinities**
smoked trout + apples +
  - horseradish
smoked trout + crème fraîche +
  - dill
smoked trout + horseradish +
  - lemon juice + olive oil +
  - purslane

---

**TRUFFLES, BLACK**

**Season:** winter
**Weight:** light
**Volume:** loud (in a subtle way!)
**Techniques:** shave

bacon
beef
cauliflower
chicken
cod
eggs: chicken, quail
foie gras
French cuisine
langoustines
lemon, juice
mushrooms (e.g., cepes, morels)
olive oil
pears
potatoes
rabbit
scallops
shellfish
stock, chicken
tarragon
vinegar, balsamic

---

**TRUFFLES, PACIFIC NORTHWEST**

**Season:** autumn
**Weight:** light
**Volume:** moderate–loud (in a subtle way!)

beef, esp. with black truffles
butter
celery root
crab, esp. with white truffles
eggs
game birds, esp. with black
truffles
Jerry Traunfeld of Woodinville, Washington's The Herbfarm on Pacific Northwest Truffles

Northwest truffles are very good for what they are. What they are not is French or Italian truffles, which are stronger. Northwest truffles pair really well with celery root puree. We serve a ravioli filled with celery root and an egg yolk. The egg yolk is raw when the ravioli is cooked; when it is served, the dish is topped with butter and shaved truffle.

The white truffles are milder than the black. I especially like the white truffles with seafood such as shellfish, especially crab. They also work with root vegetables and potatoes.

The black truffles are a little funkier, and work with red meats and game birds.

We like to prepare melted leeks, which are leeks cooked in water until they are incredibly soft, which then get a shaving of black truffle and are served with wagyu beef.

leeks, melted, esp. with black truffles
meats, red, esp. with black truffles
pasta, esp. with white truffles
potatoes, esp. with white truffles
salads, esp. with white truffles
seafood, esp. with white truffles
shellfish, esp. with white truffles
vegetables, root, esp. with white truffles

TRUFFLES, WHITE
(and White Truffle Oil) (See also Oil, Truffle)
Season: autumn
Weight: light
Volume: loud (in a subtle way!)
Techniques: shave
Tips: Shave over dishes at the last minute.

Flavor Affinities
truffles + eggs + pasta

Dishes
Pappardelle with Butter, Parmesan, and White Truffles
— Mario Batali, Babbo (New York City)

Homemade Yolk-Filled Ravioli in Truffle Butter
— Odette Fada, San Domenico (New York City)

artichokes, Jerusalem butter
cheese, Parmesan
cream / milk
eggs
Italian cuisine
onions
pasta
pears
pepper
potatoes
prosciutto
risotto
salt
thyme

TUNA
Season: summer—autumn
Weight: heavy
Volume: moderate
Techniques: braise, broil, grill, poach, raw (e.g., sushi, tartare), sauté, sear, steam, stir-fry

aioli
anchovies
arugula
asparagus
avocado
bacon
basil
bass, black
bay leaf
beans: black, fava, green, white
beets
bell peppers, esp. green, red, yellow
butter, unsalted
cabbage, green
capers
caponata
carrots
caviar
cayenne
celery
chervil
CHILE PEPPERS: dried or fresh, esp. green (e.g., jalapeño, Thai)
chili oil
chili sauce
CHIVES

I really look forward to truffle season. I love a poached egg with truffle, or a truffle salad. A truffle needs to be the central component and the dish needs to be simple. One of my favorite dishes is Jerusalem artichokes with a poached egg and shaved white truffle. We serve this in a [mason] jar that clamps on the side, and when you pop it open you get a burst of truffle aroma.
— GABRIEL KREUTHER, THE MODERN (NEW YORK CITY)

When you have a nice ripe truffle, it will have a sweet, fruity pear smell to it. I mix pear and truffle together to make a little salad. I make a sauce with chicken stock, olive oil, and add little bits of tarragon, then serve it with langoustine, which is a very sweet shellfish.
— GABRIEL KREUTHER, THE MODERN (NEW YORK CITY)
Dishes

Marinated Yellowfin Tuna with Anchovy Dressing: Quail Egg, Haricots, and Fried Panelleria Capers
— Daniel Boulud, Daniel (New York City)

Spicy Tuna Tartare with Cured Lemon, Harissa, Cucumber Yogurt
— Daniel Boulud/Bertrand Chene, Café Boulud (New York City)

Tuna Marinato with Zucchini, Gaeta Olives, and Orange
— Andrew Carmellini, A Voce (New York City)

Grilled Rare Marinated Tuna with Cumin Wafers and Cilantro Dressing
— Sanford D'Amato, Sanford (Milwaukee)

Signature Sushi: Tuna with Roasted Almond, Kalamata Olive, Foie Gras, or Italian Black Truffle
— Kaz Okochi, Kaz Sushi Bistro (Washington, DC)

Grilled Tuna with Wasabi and Pickled Ginger
— Chris Schlesinger, East Coast Grill (Cambridge, Massachusetts)

Toasted Cumin and Tangerine Seared Rare Tuna: Wasabi Mash Potato, Green Papaya Slaw, Pineapple-Ginger Nage
— Allen Susser, Chef Allen's (Aventura, Florida)

Japanese Hamachi with Roasted Bell Pepper, Kalamata Olive Sorbet, Spanish Paprika, and Basil Oil
— Charlie Trotter, Charlie Trotter's (Chicago)

Bluefin Tuna with Spicy Miso
— Charlie Trotter, Charlie Trotter's (Chicago)
One dish that we always make the same is bluefin tuna over braised veal cheeks. It is our take on *vitello tonato*. This dish has to be made with bluefin because it is meatlike and gets seasoned like meat. The fish is cooked rare and served with a little *tonato* sauce and arugula.

— SHARON HAGE, YORK STREET (DALLAS)

orange, blood or regular, juice
pancetta
paprika
**PARSLEY**, flat-leaf
passion fruit
pasta
**PEPPER**: black, green, white
pine nuts
potatoes
prosciutto
radicchio
radishes
rice
rosemary
sage
sake
**SALT**: kosher, sea
**SCALLIONS**
scallops
**SESAME**: oil, seeds
shallots
shiso
**SOY SAUCE**
spinach
stock, chicken
sugar
sweet potatoes
Tabasco sauce
tahini
tarragon
**THYME**
**TOMATOES**, tomato juice, tomato paste
veal and veal cheeks
vinaigrette
**VINEGAR**: balsamic, champagne, red wine, rice wine, sherry, white wine
vodka
wasabi
watercress

wine: dry red (Grenache, Pinot Noir, Syrah), rosé
yuzu: juice, rind

**Flavor Affinities**
tuna + aioli + capers + tomatoes
tuna + anchovies + green beans + olives + potatoes
tuna + arugula + bacon
tuna + avocado + ginger + radish
tuna + avocado + lemon + soy sauce
tuna + beets + lemon
tuna + black pepper + cilantro + cucumber + soy sauce
tuna + cilantro + cumin
tuna + cilantro + dill + garlic + mint
tuna + cilantro + dill + mint
tuna + cucumber + ginger + miso + shiso
tuna + fennel + fennel pollen
tuna + ginger + mustard
tuna + ginger + vinaigrette
tuna + jalapeño chile + cilantro + ginger + sesame oil + shallots + soy sauce
tuna + lemon + olive oil + tomatoes + watercress
tuna + sesame + wasabi

---

**TURBOT**

**Weight**: medium

**Volume**: quiet–moderate

**Techniques**: bake, broil, grill, poach, roast, sauté, steam

leeks
lemon: juice, zest
marjoram
miso
mushrooms
olive oil
parsley, flat-leaf
pepper: black, white
potatoes, esp. red, white
rosemary
saffron
sage
salt, sea
shallots
spinach
stocks: fish, mussel

---

352 The Flavor Bible
When I create a dish, I start with the fish and ask, What is the inspiration of the moment? I will choose a culture and start there. For a recent dish, I was in a Japanese mood and wanted something light and refined. I used a piece of turbot and paired it with miso and mushroom broth. The mushrooms don’t relate so much to the culture but the miso definitely does. I created a lemon miso paste with white miso and lemon confit. The fish would sit on the paste and at the last second the waiter would add the mushroom broth. If you add the broth too soon, the miso kills the mushroom flavors.

— ERIC RIPERT, LE BERNARDIN (NEW YORK CITY)

Turbot is a beautiful, delicate fish that calls to mind special occasions and celebrations. It poaches well, and takes on richer garnishes such as caviar or truffles.

— BRADFORD THOMPSON, MARY ELAINE’S AT THE PHOENICIAN (SCOTTSDALE, ARIZONA)

When you get in fresh turbot, you automatically think of pairing it with delicate flavors. It is like looking at the Queen of England: You look at it with unbelievable respect, and there is no way you are going to overload this delicate piece of fish. I like turbot with a nage with periwinkles, chervil, and parsley puree. Or I’ll make it with tiny pearl onions with a drizzle of red wine reduction made from the bones of the turbot.

— CARRIE NAHABEDIAN, NAHA (CHICAGO)

Dishes
Steam Turbot with Osetra Caviar in Champagne Sauce
— David Bouley, Danube (New York City)

tarragon
tomatoes
vanilla
wine: Champagne, white

Flavor Affinities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Flavor Affinities</th>
<th>TURKEY</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>turbot + butter + lemon + marjoram</td>
<td><strong>Season:</strong> summer–autumn</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>turbot + caviar + Champagne</td>
<td><strong>Weight:</strong> medium</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>turbot + lemon + miso + mushrooms</td>
<td><strong>Volume:</strong> quiet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Techniques:</strong> braise, grill, poach, roast, sauté, stir-fry</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>allspice</td>
<td><strong>CHESTNUTS</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>apples</td>
<td>chile peppers: dried red (esp. sweet); fresh green</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bacon</td>
<td>cinnamon</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bay leaf</td>
<td>cloves</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bread crumbs</td>
<td>corn bread</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>butter, unsalted</td>
<td>cranberries</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cardamom</td>
<td>cumin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>carrots</td>
<td>fenugreek leaves</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>celery</td>
<td>figs, dried</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cheese: white sheep or goat’s milk</td>
<td>garam masala</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(similar to feta)</td>
<td>garlic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>ginger</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>grapes, white</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>innards: turkey heart, liver</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>juniper berries</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>leeks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>lemon, juice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>lime, juice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>mushrooms, esp. wild (e.g., chanterelles)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>oil: canola, grapeseed, peanut, vegetable</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>olive oil</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>onions, esp. sweet, white</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>orange, juice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>paprika</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>parsnips</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>parsley, flat-leaf</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>pepper: black, white</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>phyllo dough</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>pine nuts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>potatoes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>raisins, esp. yellow</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>rosemary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>sage</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>salt, kosher</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>sausage, esp. Italian</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>shallots</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>soy sauce</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>spinach</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>stocks: chicken, turkey</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>stuffing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>sugar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>tarragon</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>thyme</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>tomatoes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>vermouth, dry</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
walnuts
wine, dry white, rosé
yogurt

TURKISH CUISINE
beef
chicken
cinnamon, esp. in desserts
cloves, esp. in desserts
cumin
dill
eggplant
fish
garlic
goat/sheep cheese
honey, esp. in desserts
kebabs, meat, esp. lamb
lamb, esp. grilled
lemon
mint: dried, fresh
nutmeg, esp. in desserts
olive oil
onions
paprika
parsley
pepper, black
phyllo dough
rice
sesame seeds
spinach
tomatoes
walnuts
yogurt

Flavor Affinities
chicken + garlic + paprika + parsley
cumin + lemon + parsley
eggplant + garlic + meat + onions + tomatoes
fish + dill + lemon + black pepper
lamb + cumin + dill + mint

TURMERIC
Season: year-round
Taste: bittersweet; pungent
Function: heating
Weight: light–medium
Volume: medium

Fresh turmeric gives you fruitiness and upfront flavor, plus a touch of acid that perks up a dish. If you add fresh turmeric to your curry, you will make a world of difference. When you smell the powdered stuff, it smells like nothing. Dried turmeric hurts me. It hurts the soul. It is really not what turmeric is. Unfortunately, frozen turmeric isn’t a good substitute, either. You have to use it fresh.

— BRAD FARMERIE, PUBLIC (NEW YORK CITY)

Turmeric is always the first spice I add to a curry, like the primer on a canvas. The amount of turmeric controls the entire path that curry will take. I cook in layers of flavor, so only when I am happy with the aroma of one layer will I then add ingredients to create the next layer. If I am making curry, the pan will have onions, garlic, and tomatoes, and then the very first thing to go in is the turmeric. If I use a lot of turmeric, it’s destined to be a richer-spiced curry, as I’ll also have to put in more of all the other spices to balance the flavors.

— MEERU DHALWALA, VIJ’S (VANCOUVER)

Asian cuisine
beans
beef
butter
Caribbean cuisine
cheese
chicken
chile peppers
chutneys
cilantro
cloves
coconut milk
coriander
cumin
*CURRY LEAVES, POWDER
eggplant
eggs
fennel
fish
garlic
ginger
Indian cuisine
Indonesian cuisine
kaffir lime, leaves
lamb
lemongrass
lentils
meats, esp. white
Middle Eastern cuisine
Moroccan cuisine

mustard
mustard seeds
North African cuisine
paella
paprika
parsley
pepper
pickles
pork
potatoes
poultry
ras el hanout (key ingredient)
rice
sauces, esp. creamy
sausage
seafood
shallots
shellfish
shrimp
soups
Southeast Asian cuisine
spinach
stewed dishes
tamarind
Thai cuisine
vegetables, esp. root
yogurt
**Flavor Affinities**
numeric + cilantro + cumin + garlic + onion + paprika + parsley +
pepper (Moroccan chermoula)
numeric + coriander + cumin (Indian cuisine)

### UMAMI
**Taste:** savory or savory + salty

- aged foods (e.g., cheese)
- anchovies
- beef, esp. aged
- bonito flakes
- broccoli
- carrots
- cheese, aged (e.g., blue, Gruyère, Parmesan, Roquefort)
- chicken
- clams
- cured foods
- fermented foods
- fish sauce, Asian
- grapefruit
- grapes
- ketchup
- lobster
- mackerel
- meats
- miso
- mushrooms, esp. shiitake
- oysters
- pork
- potatoes
- ripe ingredients
- sardines
- sauces, meat-based
- scallops
- seafood
- seaweed, dried
- soy beans
- soy sauce
- squid
- steaks, esp. dry-aged, grilled
- stocks, meat-based
- sweet potatoes
- tea, green
- tomatoes and tomato sauce
- truffles

### TURNIP GREENS
(See Greens, Turnip)

### TURNIPS
**Season:** year-round
**Taste:** sweet
**Weight:** medium–heavy
**Volume:** moderate–loud
**Techniques:** boil, braise, deep-fry, roast, simmer, steam

- bacon
- bay leaf
- butter, unsalted
- carrots
- celery root
- cheese, Parmesan
- cream
- curry
- dill
- duck, esp. roasted
- garlic
- honey
- juniper berries
- lamb
- leeks
- lemon, juice
- marjoram
- nutmeg
- onions, esp. green, yellow
- parsley
- pepper, black, white
- poppy seeds
- pork, esp. roasted
- potatoes
- prosciutto
- salt: kosher, rock, sea
- shiso
- stock, chicken
- sugar (pinch)
- sweet potatoes
- thyme
- vinegar
- tuna
- vinegar, balsamic
- walnuts

### VANILLA
**Taste:** sweet
**Weight:** medium
**Volume:** quiet

- allspice
- almonds
- apples
- apricots
- BAKED GOODS, e.g., cakes, cookies
- bay leaf
- beans, black
- beef
- berries
- beverages (e.g., eggnog, soft drinks)
- brown butter
- butter
- butterscotch
- cakes
- candies
- caramel
- cardamom
- cheese, ricotta
- chicken
- chiles
- CHOCOLATE
- cilantro
- cinnamon
- cloves
- coconut
- COFFEE
- cookies
- CREAM AND ICE CREAM
- cream cheese
- custards
- DESSERTS
- eggs
- figs
- fish
- fruits, esp. poached
- ginger
- honey
I always overlooked vanilla when I was growing up. After I made my first vanilla ice cream, however, it was no longer just “the white one”! I like the nuances that different kinds of vanilla offer. Working at Le Bernardin where quality is paramount, for our ice cream it has to be Tahitian. When vanilla is the star, this is the bean you choose. It has an interesting woody, cherrylike flavor to it that I just love. Bourbon vanilla is a great workhorse bean that does well in a supporting role.

— Michael Laiskonis, Le Bernardin (New York City)

If I poach a pear, I will always add vanilla. Vanilla also pairs really well with sweet herbs, especially tarragon and bay leaf.

— Gina DePalma, Babbo (New York City)

So many dessert recipes call for vanilla that it is like salt for dessert. But sometimes it doesn’t have a place and can muck up things. Vanilla should be the star of the show. I love vanilla in dairy desserts. I do a vanilla bean Bavarese (an Italian Bavarian cream) that I serve with brown butter and bay leaf. Vanilla and fresh bay leaf bring each other alive, it is a fantastic combination. Bay leaf is very sweet; it is like a truffle in that it is more about the aroma than the flavor.

— Gina DePalma, Babbo (New York City)

*ICE CREAM*

pork
puddings
rhubarb
rice
rosemary
saffron
salads, fruit
scallops
seafood
seeds: poppy, sesame
shellfish
soups
stocks
strawberries

SUGAR

tamarind
tea
tomatoes
vegetables (e.g., root)

vinegar, balsamic
whiskey
wine, Champagne
yogurt

**Flavor Affinities**

vanilla + almonds + cream + whiskey
vanilla + bay leaf + brown butter
vanilla + chicken + cream

**VEAL — IN GENERAL**

*Season:* spring
*Weight:* light-medium
*Volume:* quiet
*Techniques:* braise (shanks), pair roast (chops), roast, stew (breast, shoulder)

almonds
anchovies
apples
asparagus
basil
bay leaf
beans, esp. flageolets, haricots verts
beef, short ribs
beets
bell peppers: green, red, yellow
brandy
bread and bread crumbs
butter, unsalted
capers
caraway seeds
celery

celery root

dessert: Emmental, Gruyère,
Parmesan, Swiss
chervil
chile peppers
chives
cider
coconut milk
cream
crème fraîche
cucumbers, sautéed
diU
hard-boiled s.
egg (cuisine
fr
GARLIC
gremolata
ham: smoked, hock
hazelnuts
Italian cuisine
leeks
LEMON: juice, zest
lemon verbena
lime: juice, leaves
Madeira
marjoram
milk
MUSHROOMS: button,
channelerelle, morels, oyster,
porcini, shiitake, white, wild
mustard, Dijon
nutmeg
OIL: canola, corn, peanut,
vegetable
olive oil
olives, black
ONIONS, esp. pearl, sweet, white
orange: juice, zest
parsley, flat-leaf
parsnips
pasta, esp. fettuccine
peas, spring
PEPPER: black, white
polenta
potatoes
prosciutto
rice
rosemary
sage
SALT: kosher, sea
shallots
spaetzle
spinach
STOCKS: beef, chicken, veal,
vegetable
tarragon
thyme
TOMATOES: canned, paste,
plum, sauce
truffles
tuna
turnips
vanilla
vinegar: balsamic, champagne
watercress
WINE, DRY WHITE
zucchini

**Flavor Affinities**

veal + asparagus + morels
veal + basil + lemon
veal + capers + lemon
veal + cream + mushrooms
veal + cucumber + mustard
veal + garlic + Parmesan cheese +
tomatoes
veal + gremolata + orange
veal + Marsala wine +
mushrooms
veal + orange + polenta
veal + prosciutto + sage

**VEAL — BREAST**

**Techniques:** braise, grill, roast

beans, white
cheese, Fontina
garlic
olive oil
onions, esp. Spanish
pancetta
parsley, flat-leaf
rosemary
stock, chicken
thyme
wine, white

**VEAL — CHEEKS**

When we make veal cheek osso
bucò on polenta, each dish gets a
squeeze of orange and orange
zest on it.

— ANDREW CARMELLINI, A VOCE (NEW YORK CITY)

**VEAL — CHOP**

**Techniques:** braise, grill, pan
roast, sauté, stuff

artichokes
basil
beans, esp. fava
broccoli rabe
butter
Campari
capers
chives
cilantro
coriander
garlic
ginger
gnocchi
leeks
lemon, juice
Madeira
marjoram
mint
mirin
miso
mushrooms (e.g., black trumpet)
mushrooms, wild, esp.
channelerelle, porcini
mustard, Dijon
olive oil
olives: black, kalamata
onions
parsley, flat-leaf
peas
pepper, white
pine nuts
polenta
potatoes
prosciutto
radishes
red pepper flakes
salt
sesame: oil, seeds
shallots
soy sauce
stock, chicken
sugar, brown
thyme
tomatoes, sun-dried
watercress
wine, dry white
Dishes

“San Angelo” Veal Rib Chop with “Texas Grits” and Saffron Aioli
— Monica Pope, T'afia (Houston)

Fricassee de Veau Printanière: Savory Veal Stew with English Peas, Asparagus, Morels, and Spring Vegetables
— Michael Romano, at the 2005 James Beard Awards gala reception

Sautéed Wisconsin Veal Chop, White Polenta, Wild Mushrooms
— Jean Joho, Everest (Chicago)

Veal Chop with Truffled Leek Pierogies, Roasted Spring Onion, Creamed Spinach, and Chive Crème Fraîche
— Peter Nowakowski, Rat's (Hamilton, New Jersey)

Organic Veal Chop with Madeira Sauce and Truffled "Macaroni and Cheese"
— David Waltuck, Chanterelle (New York City)

Flavor Affinities
veal chop + artichokes + basil
veal chop + celery root + cream + Dijon mustard
veal chop + garlic + chanterelle mushrooms
veal chop + leeks + peas
veal chop + leeks + polenta
veal chop + mushrooms + watercress

VEAL — LOIN
Techniques: braise, grill, pan roast, roast, sauté

arugula
basil
cheese, Fontina
chestnuts
cider, apple
citrus
cranberries
garlic
mushrooms, wild (e.g., chanterelles, morels)
nuts (e.g., almonds, hazelnuts, pine nuts, pistachios)
onions
oregano
pasta
pumpkin
risotto
rosemary
sage
stock, veal tarragon thyme tomatoes wine, red

VEAL — SHANKS
Techniques: braise

bay leaf
carrots

celery
cilantro
cinnamon
cumin
garlic
gremolata
horseradish
lemon: juice, zest
marjoram
mushrooms, porcini
olive oil
olives
onions, esp. red, white
oranges
osso buco (ingredient)
parsley
pepper
pine nuts
raisins, yellow
risotto
rosemary
salt
stocks: chicken, veal thyme
tomatoes: paste, sauce truffles, white
WINE, WHITE

Flavor Affinities
veal shanks + capers + gremolata + olives
veal shanks + lemon + olives
veal shanks + onions + tomatoes
veal shanks + tomatoes + thyme

Dishes

Grilled Veal Loin Medallions on Pumpkin Fettuccine
— Marcel Desaulniers, The Trellis (Williamsburg, Virginia)

Pan-Seared Tenderloin of Veal with Wild Morel Mushrooms, Local Asparagus, and Raviolis of Virginia Country Ham and Fontina Cheese
— Patrick O'Connell, The Inn at Little Washington (Washington, Virginia)

Roasted Veal Loin with Caramelized Onions, Almonds, Pine Nuts, and Pistachios
— Charlie Trotter, Charlie Trotter's (Chicago)
VEAL — TENDERLOIN

Techniques: braise, grill, sauté, sear

asparagus
bacon
basil
capers
cheese, Fontina
cream
ham
mushrooms, morel
mustard, Dijon
onions, red
sage
tarragon
thyme
truffle oil
wine, white

Flavor Affinities
veal tenderloin + asparagus + morel mushrooms
veal tenderloin + cream + morel mushrooms
veal tenderloin + garlic + pancetta

VEGETABLES
(See specific vegetables)

Tips: Onion enhances the flavor of vegetables, and brings out their sweetness.

VEGETABLES, ROOT
(See specific root vegetables, e.g., Carrots)

Techniques: roast

VEGETARIAN DISHES

Tips: To add a deep, meaty flavor to vegetarian dishes — without adding meat — try:

- chile peppers, chipotle — use adobo sauce from canned chiles
- liquid smoke
- miso
- mushrooms
- onions, roasted
- paprika, smoked shallots, roasted
- soy sauce

All year long, I make a pistou [a vegetable soup seasoned with basil, garlic, and olive oil]. However, it changes not only by the season, but by the week. In the spring, I’ll add peas. In the summer, it will have zucchini and basil. In the fall, I’ll add salsify, scallions, and leeks, and in the winter, broccoli and even soybeans along with parsley.

— DAN BARBER, BLUE HILL AT STONE BARN (POCANTICO HILLS, NEW YORK)

Root vegetables are so sweet and full of sugar in the fall. Fall and winter vegetables thrive on cold and frost. The plant’s water converts to sugar and when it is picked you have a really sweet vegetable. A root vegetable, like a sweet carrot or parsnip, is similar in sweetness to fruit, so you can put the two in a salad and they will go well together.

— DAN BARBER, BLUE HILL AT STONE BARN (POCANTICO HILLS, NEW YORK)
Because venison doesn't have much fat, you need to be careful how you cut its richness. I will use chutney that has nice fruit acids with the addition of a little vinegar.

— BRAD FARMERIE, PUBLIC (NEW YORK CITY)

We offer venison medallions with huckleberry sauce and glazed pears. Venison is a pretty sweet meat. Huckleberries are found in the woods and pears are autumnal. The pears are poached with star anise and cinnamon, and then they are roasted to caramelized them a little, which adds extra depth to them and to the dish.

— GABRIEL KREUTHER, THE MODERN (NEW YORK CITY)

One of my favorite dishes is medallions of ranch venison, huckleberries, roasted chestnuts and Brussels sprouts, celery root, and Honeycrisp applesauce. I love a sweet flavor with venison. A traditional marinade is with vinegar, red wine, herbs, and juniper berries. A natural pairing would be roasted pears or apples.

— CARRIE NAHABEDIAN, NAHA (CHICAGO)

VENISON (See also Game — In General)
Season: autumn
Weight: heavy
Volume: moderate–loud
Techniques: braise, broil, grill, roast, sauté

Dishes

New Zealand Venison Crusted in Pink Peppercorns: Jerusalem Artichoke and Young Garlic Confit, Roasted Brussels Sprout Leaves
— David Bouley, Bouley (New York City)

Shiitake-Crusted New Zealand Venison Loin, Peppered Spinach, Sweet Potato Dauphinoise, and Sour Cherry Compote
— Brad Farmerie, Public (New York City)

Smoked New Zealand Venison Carpaccio with Licorice Pickled Onions
— Brad Farmerie, Monday Room (New York City)

Medallions of Ranch Venison with Huckleberries, Roasted Chestnuts and Brussels Sprouts, Celery Root, and Honeycrisp Applesauce
— Carrie Nahabedian, Naha (Chicago)

Venison Medallions, Grilled Grits, and Green Peach Relish with Okra and Tomato
— Frank Stitt, Highlands Bar and Grill (Birmingham, Alabama)

Millbrook Farm Venison Loin with Kohlrabi, White Runner Beans, Pickled Garlic, and Spiced Dates
— Charlie Trotter, Charlie Trotter's (Chicago)
pancetta
parsley, flat-leaf
parsnips
peaches
PEARS
PEPPER: black, green, pink, Szechuan, white
pineapple
pomegranate
port
potatoes
pumpkin
raisins
rosemary
sage
salt, kosher
savory
shallots
soy sauce
spinach
squash: acorn, butternut
star anise
STOCKS: beef, chicken, venison
sweet potatoes
thyme
tomatoes and tomato paste
turnips, esp. yellow
vinegar: balsamic, red wine, rice, sherry
watercress
WINE: red (e.g., Cabernet Sauvignon), dry white

**Flavor Affinities**
venison + curry + pomegranate seeds
venison + garlic + juniper berries + rosemary
venison + garlic + peppercorns
venison + garlic + rosemary + tomatoes + red wine
venison + parsnips + pepper
venison + pears + rosemary

**VERJUS**
*Taste:* sour–sweet
*Tips:* Use instead of vinegar or lemon juice, or as a seasoning. *Verjus* is often more wine friendly than vinegar.

apples
apricots
asparagus
berries
cheese, goat
chicken
cranberries
cucumbers
fennel
fish (e.g., halibut, salmon, tuna)
foie gras
FRUIT
garlic
ginger
herbs (e.g., dill, mint, thyme)
lamb
lettuces
marinades
meat
melon
mustard, Dijon
olive oil
onions
pears
pomegranate
pork
poultry
quail
quince
rabbit
SALADS: FRUIT, GREEN
sauces
shellfish (e.g., crab, scallops, shrimp)
soups
soy sauce
spinach
strawberries
sugar: brown, white
tuna
vegetables
vinegar, rice wine

**VIETNAMESE CUISINE**
basil, Thai
bean sprouts
beef, in soup (pho)
chicken
chile peppers
cilantro
cucumbers
fish
fish sauce
garlic
ginger
lemon
lemongrass
lettuce
lime
milk, sweetened condensed (e.g., in coffee)
mint
noodles
pork
raw foods
rice
scallions
shallots
shellfish
shrimp
star anise
sugar

**Flavor Affinities**
chile peppers + fish sauce + lemon
fish sauce + herbs
fish sauce + lemon
VINEGAR — IN GENERAL
I use a variety of vinegars and right now I am using cider vinegar, balsamic, and white balsamic. What vinegar you grab really depends on how far you can push the product. When we make a walnut sauce, it can handle a good-sized dash of cider vinegar. In a fluke tartare, we’ll only use a drop of vinegar.
— MICHAEL ANTHONY, GRAMERCY TAVERN (NEW YORK CITY)

VINEGAR, BALSAMIC
Taste: sour, sweet
Weight: medium–heavy (depending on age)
Volume: moderate–loud
Tips: Use when you want a sweet, low-acid vinegar.

Add at end of cooking (and never boil!) or use to finish a dish.
apricots
arugula
basil
beans, green
bell peppers: green, red
berries, esp. strawberries
brown butter
cabbage
cheese, Parmesan
cherries
chicken
chicory
eggplant
endive

High-quality vinegars such as Gegenbauer vinegars [from Vienna, Austria], have a place in my kitchen. I’ll use a few drops of cucumber vinegar with cucumbers, a raspberry vinegar with raspberries, and a tomato vinegar with tomatoes to intensify the flavor of the ingredient.
— SHARON HAGE, YORK STREET (DALLAS)
Balsamic vinegar is wonderful with fruit. I love the Italian dish of strawberries with balsamic vinegar.
— GABRIEL KREUTHER, THE MODERN (NEW YORK CITY)

I like white balsamic vinegar because it has fruitiness and a hint of sweetness to it, but not aggressive acidity.
— DANIEL HUMM, ELEVEN MADISON PARK (NEW YORK CITY)

**SALADS AND SALAD DRESSINGS**
- sesame oil
- steak
- strawberries
- tomatoes
- vegetables
- vinaigrette
- vinegar: red wine, sherry (blending vinegars)
- walnut oil
- watercress
- white truffle oil

**Flavor Affinities**
- balsamic vinegar + brown butter + fish
- white balsamic vinegar + white truffle oil + whole grain mustard

**VINEGAR, BANYULS**
**Taste:** sour—sweet
**Weight:** light
**Volume:** quiet—moderate
**Tips:** Can substitute for red wine vinegar. Use to deglaze a pan.

I'll use Banyuls vinegar as our everyday vinegar for finishing dishes. A crispy fish like ivory salmon served on the rare side will get a drop of Banyuls vinegar right before it goes out to the table. I'll also use it as a delicate finish for birds like quail.
— SHARON HAGE, YORK STREET (DALLAS)

**VINEGAR, CABERNET SAUVIGNON**
We finish most of our jus for meat dishes with cabernet vinegar. If you use it at the beginning of the cooking process, it cooks out because it is so light.
— BRAD FARMERIE, PUBLIC (NEW YORK CITY)

**VINEGAR, CHAMPAGNE**
**Taste:** sour
**Weight:** light
**Volume:** quiet—moderate
**Tips:** Champagne vinegar is the most delicate vinegar.

- artichokes
- avocados
- delicate dishes
- fennel
- fish
- greens, delicate salad (e.g., baby greens, butter lettuce)
- leeks
- oils: nut, truffle
- olive oil

Sorbet is about pure flavor and should be a very intense experience of the fruit's flavor. You can jack up the flavor of your sorbet by choosing the correct acid to balance it. For example, lemon juice is really strong. If you have sweet sorbet, you can add a ton of lemon juice that will balance the sweetness but give you a lemon dessert. For some sorbets, I prefer to use champagne vinegar. It is light and easy to use. Vinegar is a more potent fruity acid, so you can use less and bring up the fruit of your dessert. I use champagne vinegar for mango or raspberry sorbet. It is made from grapes, which are berries, and is a natural for berry desserts — berries with berries.
— GINA DEPALMA, BABBO (NEW YORK CITY)

Most of our ingredients are pickled with cider vinegar and a touch of sugar. I like its fresh green appley flavor and the way it makes things pop.
— BRAD FARMERIE, PUBLIC (NEW YORK CITY)
VINEGAR, CHAMPAGNE (CONT.)

potatoes
raspberries
salads
shellfish
strawberries
vegetables

VINEGAR, CHARDONNAY
Chardonnay vinegar is a sweet acid, so you don't have to add additional sugar to your pickling mixture.
— BRAD FARMERIE, PUBLIC (NEW YORK CITY)

VINEGAR, CIDER
Taste: sour
Weight: light
Volume: quiet–moderate

American cuisine
apples
coleslaw
fruits, esp. in salads
ginger
grains
herbs
oil
pears
peas
pork
salads and salad dressings
sauces
smoked fish
smoked meats
sugar

Flavor Affinities
cider vinegar + ginger + sugar

VINEGAR, FRUIT
Taste: sour, sweet
Weight: light
Volume: quiet–moderate

avocados
chicken

Inniskillin ice wine vinegar is really delicious, but expensive. It is delicious with foie gras. It is a fairly reduced sweet and sour vinegar and works as just a drizzle on a plate. It is also good dressed on a salad that you would serve alongside a foie gras terrine.
— TRACI DES JARDINS, JARDINIÈRE (SAN FRANCISCO)

Minus 8 is an ice wine vinegar, so named because the grapes are frozen to minus 8 degrees and then squeezed to make the vinegar. It still has acid to it, but it is more viscous, sweet, and tart. It is great with foie gras.
— SHARON HAGE, YORK STREET (DALLAS)

fruit salads
hazelnut oil
meats, white
oils, esp. nut
peanut oil
pears
salads and salad dressings
turkey
walnut oil

AVOID
cheese
eggs

VINEGAR, ICE WINE
Taste: sour, sweet
Weight: light
Volume: quiet–moderate, with 5 percent acidity

berries
FOIE GRAS, ESP. TERRINE
fruit
lobster
oil: grapeseed
onions
oysters
peaches
salads
sauces
scallops
seafood
sorbet

Red wine vinegar is my workhorse vinegar for cold dishes. I use it in dressings and marinades.
— SHARON HAGE, YORK STREET (DALLAS)

strawberries
vegetables

VINEGAR, MALT
Taste: sour
Weight: light
Volume: loud, with moderate acidity
Tips: Sprinkle on foods judiciously.

dressings
fish, fried
oil: hazelnut, peanut
olive oil
pickles

AVOID
sauces

VINEGAR, RED WINE
Taste: sour
Weight: light–medium
Volume: loud, with high acidity
Tips: Red wine vinegar can stand up to spices and stronger herbs.

beans, green
chard
cherries
chicken
cinnamon
cold dishes
The minute sherry vinegar is added to a dish, the music gets turned up. It’s not just its flavor, but its aroma as well. It makes things sizzle. It is not just when it is used in salads, but it is also the spark that makes gazpacho the unique soup it is. It is the spark that makes a humble lentil stew made with carrots, garlic, onion, and water a new thing. At the end, you add just a touch of vinegar and you have this wonderful flavor that sparkles... We have made sorbet out of sherry vinegar and what you get is something that makes “the king of refreshing” even more refreshing! You can go either savory or sweet with this sorbet: You could serve orange segments with the sherry sorbet on top, a touch of olive oil, an anchovy, a couple of black olives, and you have a salad. Or you could take the same oranges, add a touch of honey on top, manchego cheese, the sherry vinegar sorbet, and have a sweet dessert.

— JOSÉ ANDRÉS, CAFÉ ATLÁNITICO (WASHINGTON, DC)

For our meat dishes, we deglaze with vinegar or verjus — and most often it will be sherry vinegar. That’s my workhorse vinegar for hot dishes.

— SHARON HAGE, YORK STREET (DALLAS)

There is a range of sherry vinegar from light to heavy, and I use them all. I love sherry vinegar on almost all vegetables, but especially asparagus and cucumbers.

— KATSUYA FUKUSHIMA, MINIBAR (WASHINGTON, DC)

---

VINEGAR, RICE WINE

| Taste: sour, sweet | Weight: light | Volume: quiet, with lower acidity |
---|---|---|

Asian cuisine
- cilantro
- coriander
- cucumbers
- fruit, esp. salads
- ginger
- honey

Japanese cuisine
- lemon
- mirin
- noodles
- oils: peanut, sesame
- pepper: black, pink
- rice (e.g., for sushi)
- salads
- salmon
- scallions
- sesame seeds
- soups, esp. creamy, potato
- soy sauce
- star anise
- wasabi

pears
- radicchio
- rich dishes
- salad dressings
- sauces

Spanish cuisine
- tomatoes
- tortilla, Spanish vegetables

VINEGAR, SHERRY

| Taste: sour, sweet | Weight: light | Volume: moderate |
---|---|---|

- apples
- asparagus
- beans
- chicken
- cucumbers
- duck
- figs
- fish
- gazpacho
- greens, esp. bitter
- meat dishes
- mustard, grainy
- nuts
- oils: nut, walnut
- onions
- orange
- pancetta

endive
- lettuces, esp. Bibb, iceberg, romaine
- oil, mild (e.g., peanut)
- olive oil

VINEGAR, TARRAGON

(herb-flavored vinegar)

| Taste: sour | Weight: light | Volume: moderate–loud |
---|---|---|

- endive
- lettuce, esp. Bibb, iceberg, romaine
- oil, mild (e.g., peanut)
- olive oil
Vincotto is a byproduct of balsamic vinegar, and is sweet and sour. It is very syrupy and good drizzled over fruit or cheese.

— SHARON HAGE, YORK STREET (DALLAS)

**VINEGAR, VINCOTTO**
(Cooked Wine)

**Taste:** sour–sweet  
**Weight:** medium–heavy  
**Volume:** moderate–loud

almonds  
bacon  
cheese, burrata  
desserts  
fennel  
figs  
fruit  
Italian cuisine  
peaches  
pears  
plums  
meats, esp. grilled, roasted  
salads and salad dressings  
yogurt

**VODKA**

**Weight:** light–medium  
**Volume:** quiet

amaretto  
apples and apple juice  
beef consommé  
beet juice  
berries  
blackberries  
caraway  
carrots, juice  
caviar  
celery and leaves  
celery root  
cilantro  
cinnamon  
cloves  
coffee  
coconut  
cranberry juice  
cream  
cucumber  
currants, black  
ginger  
grapefruit juice  
honey  
horseradish  
kaffir lime leaf

Using vodka as a base spirit in a cocktail makes it drier, while propelling flavors and knitting them together. . . . I love the combination of Chopin vodka, carrot juice, lemon thyme. If I have it, I’ll use Farigoule — a liqueur from Provence made with wild thyme — and lime.

— JERRI BANKS, COCKTAIL CONSULTANT (NEW YORK CITY)

I love to draw on the roots of a spirit, and to link a cocktail back to the foods of the table of their country of origin. I’ll pair [Eastern European] vodkas with the flavors of the zakuski table [which historically features several small dishes of beets, cabbage, eggplant, and mushrooms], such as beets, caraway, and horseradish.

— JERRI BANKS, COCKTAIL CONSULTANT (NEW YORK CITY)
Flavor Affinities

**Walnuts** are my favorite nut. I like their bitter quality. They pair well with honey, apples, and pears.

— GINA DEPALMA, BABBO (NEW YORK CITY)

Walnuts are not as versatile as other nuts. If you look at its flavor, it is the opposite end of the spectrum from a macadamia nut because it has a more complicated flavor. You are not getting something that is buttery that coats your palate; you are getting more nut flavor. I can't think of many times when you wouldn't use it, but you might use a smaller amount.

— MARCEL DESAULNIERS, THE TRELLIS (WILLIAMSBURG, VIRGINIA)

Walnuts are an oilier nut but still not as strong or dominating as a pecan. I like to combine walnuts with maple in desserts. They work with apples as well as pears or quince.

— EMILY LUCHETTI, FARALLON (SAN FRANCISCO)
**Dishes**

Warm Apple and Walnut Budino with Cinnamon Gelato
— Gina DePalma, pastry chef, Babbo (New York City)

Walnut-Prune Tart with Thyme Sherbet and Caramel Gastrique, Served with a 30-Year-Old Tawny Port
— Ellie Nelson, pastry chef, Jardinière (San Francisco)

SUGAR: brown, confectioners', white
sweet potatoes
tea
vanilla
walnut oil
whiskey
wine: dry, sweet
yogurt

**Flavor Affinities**

walnuts + anise + dried figs + orange
walnuts + apples + honey
walnuts + caramel + prunes
walnuts + coffee + cream
walnuts + cumin + prunes

**WARMING**

**Function:** Ingredients believed to have warming properties; useful in cold weather.

alcohol
barley
chile peppers
coffee
cranberries
fruits, dried (e.g., dates)
garlic
grains (e.g., polenta, quinoa)
honey
hot beverages
meat, red
mustard
nuts
oils: almond, mustard
olive oil
onions

spices, warming (e.g., black pepper, cayenne, cinnamon, cloves, ginger, nutmeg, turmeric)
vegetables, root (e.g., carrots, potatoes)
vinegar
walnuts

**WASABI**

**Taste:** hot
**Weight:** medium
**Volume:** very loud

avocados
beef
crab
cream
fish
ginger (e.g., with seafood)

**JAPANESE CUISINE**
mirin
miso
olive oil
onions, green
rice
salmon
sauces
seafood
sesame: oil, seeds
shrimp

soy sauce
sushi and sashimi
tofu
tuna
vinegar, rice wine

**WATER CHESTNUTS**

**Season:** summer–fall
**Taste:** sweet
**Weight:** light–medium
**Volume:** quiet
**Techniques:** raw, stir-fry

bacon
chicken
Chinese cuisine
garlic
ginger
scallions
sesame: oil, seeds
soy sauce
sugar
vinegar, rice wine

**WATERCRESS**

**Season:** spring, autumn
**Taste:** bitter, sweet
**Weight:** light
**Volume:** moderate
**Techniques:** raw

almonds
apples
asparagus, esp. white
bacon
bean sprouts
beef, esp. roasted
beets
bell peppers, esp. red

---

**Dishes**

Insalata “A Voce” with Green Apple, Marcona Almonds, Watercress, Pecorino
— Andrew Carmellini, A Voce (New York City)

Watercress and Endive Salad with Mediterranean Cucumber, Marinated Beets, and Mascarpone Croutons
— Judy Rodgers, Zuni Café (San Francisco)
I thought the combination of watermelon and feta cheese sounded horrible when I first heard it. Then I tasted it, and it works.

— MICHAEL LAISKONIS, LE BERNARDIN (NEW YORK CITY)

Lemony herbs like basil or anise hyssop work with watermelon.

— JERRY TRAUNFELD, THE HERBFARM (WOODINVILLE, WASHINGTON)
I started working on my watermelon salad years ago at Jean Georges restaurant. It started out as a watermelon and goat cheese salad for summertime. The dish was a very refreshing summer dish with the rich goat cheese and the fresh sweet watermelon. You felt like you were eating in a garden! It then went on to become watermelon with fresh tomatoes, but I still wasn't happy with it. The texture of the tomato didn't work with the texture of the watermelon. I then turned the tomatoes into a confit, cooking them in the oven over two hours with olive oil to concentrate their flavor. The dish is now watermelon, with a layer of tomato confit, topped with pistachios that just get browned in the oven, then a drizzle of olive oil and salt and pepper. The whole thing is then flashed in the oven for just a minute or two to warm it. Just before serving it gets a drizzle of balsamic vinegar. It is not only a beautiful play of flavors, but of colors as well.

— GABRIEL KREUTHER, THE MODERN (NEW YORK CITY)
**WHISKEY** (See also Bourbon)

*Weight:* heavy  
*Volume:* loud

al·spice  
chocolate  
cinnamon  
cream and ice cream  
dried fruits  
figs  
ginger or ginger ale  
honey  
lemon juice  
orange curaçao  
pears  
spices: cinnamon, star anise  
sugar: brown, white  
sweet potatoes  
vanilla

---

**Flavor Affinities**

whiskey + cinnamon + dried fruits + ginger + lemon + star anise  
whiskey + lemon + orange curaçao

---

**WILD RICE** (See Rice, Wild)

**WINE** (See individual varietals)

---

**WINTER**

*Weather:* typically cold  
*Techniques:* bake, braise, glaze, roast, simmer, slow-cook

- bananas  
- beans  
- beef  
- braised dishes  
- broccoli (peak: February)  
- Brussels sprouts (peak: December)  
- cabbage  
- caramel  
- chocolate  
- citrus fruit  
- dates (peak: December)  
- game  
- grains, heavy  
- grapefruit (peak: February)  
- greens, winter  
- lemons (peak: January)  
- lentils  
- limes  
- lobster  
- maple syrup  
- mushrooms, wild (peak: December)  
- mussels  
- orange, mandarin (peak: January)  
- passion fruit  
- pears (peak: December)  
- plantains  
- pork  
- potatoes  
- roasted dishes  
- root vegetables  
- rosemary  
- sage  
- soups  
- spices, warming  
- squashes, winter  
- squid  
- stewed dishes  
- sunchoke  
- sweet potatoes (peak: December)  
- tangerines (peak: January)  
- turnips (peak: December)  
- venison  
- water chestnuts (peak: February)  
- yams (peak: December)

---

**YAMS** (See Sweet Potatoes)

**YOGURT**

*Taste:* sour  
*Function:* heating  
*Weight:* medium–heavy  
*Volume:* moderate–loud

- almonds  
- apricots  
- bananas

---

Winter vegetables work with winter herbs. Sage and rosemary work with potatoes and root vegetables.

— **JERRY TRAUFELD,** THE HERBFARM (WOODBINE, WASHINGTON)

I think of beef and pork as *winter* meats.

— **MICHEL RICHARD,** CITRONELLE (WASHINGTON, DC)

With my desserts, I focus on chocolate all year round, but use it even more in *winter.* In California, the fruit is so wonderful in the summer that that is the place to focus. In summer, I can write my whole menu and forget chocolate — that is how good the fruit is here! In winter, it is the opposite. There are not eight unique things to focus on. So chocolate comes into play because it is a real comfort food and warming, too. Winter with its cool nights becomes soufflé season. Winter is when all the special citrus fruits are available. Thank God for that, because you can work with Cara Cara oranges, lemon, and tropical fruits like passion fruit. Mangos are available year-round, but winter is when I use them because there’s no competition from berries and other summer fruits. What is great about the tropical fruits in winter is that they also bring color to the menu. Pies and tarts work year-round because you can put anything in them, from chocolate to fruit.

— **EMILY LUCHETTI,** FARALLON (SAN FRANCISCO)

---

*Flavor Matchmaking: The Charts* 371
One of my favorite desserts is Greek yogurt, warm caramel sauce, and aged, 25-year-old balsamic vinegar. The yogurt is really rich and not too acidic. On the yogurt, I put a salty pine nut brittle, and then the drizzle of vinegar. It works because of the beautiful balance of salt, sweet, and acid.

— GINA DEPALMA, BABBO (NEW YORK CITY)

Fresh yuzu is expensive, so I use yuzu juice to add acid to a dish. It is great on seafood. It is not as pungent as lime, and has a little sweetness to it. When you put it on something hot like fish, it also brings out its floral notes.

— KATSUYA FUKUSHIMA, MINIBAR (WASHINGTON, DC)

I had just come back from Japan and was inspired, so I made a yuzu curd served with green tea ice cream. The dish has some small bit players like segments of grapefruit which I have always liked with green tea. When you have a perfect grapefruit, it is a little bitter and sweet, just like green tea. Grapefruit reinforces the yuzu because though it is citrus it is a very different flavored citrus. I’ll be honest — it looks cool as well, with the pink and green being served together. For texture I add caramelized Rice Krispies. This makes it a homage to Japan: You have rice, green tea, yuzu, and a little ginger caramel.

— MICHAEL LAISKONIS, LE BERNARDIN (NEW YORK CITY)
Just like the lemon that is often served on the side with grilled fish, just a splash of yuzu juice makes a lot of things delightful. I love both its aroma and flavor with lighter fish, such as flounder, fluke, and scallops.

I recently went to a restaurant where a young chef was trying to be creative, and he paired sweet shrimp with scallion oil, which hid the flavors of the shrimp. I tried to politely suggest that he try yuzu juice instead, which would bring out the sweetness of the sweet shrimp.

— KAZ OKUCHI, KAZ SUSHI BISTRO (WASHINGTON, DC)

Dishes

Yuzu Green Tea Tart with Lychee and Green Tea Marshmallows
— François Payard, Payard Patisserie and Bistro (New York City)

Flavor Affinities

yuzu + caramel + grapefruit + green tea

ZUCCHINI (See also Summer Squash)
Season: spring–summer
Taste: sweet, astringent
Function: cooling
Weight: light–medium
Volume: quiet–moderate
Techniques: fry, grill, pan roast, roast, sauté

BASIL
bell peppers: green, red, yellow
bread crumbs
butter
CHEESE: cheddar, dry feta, goat,
Gruyère, mozzarella,
PARMESAN, pecorino, queso fresco, RICOTTA

chile peppers: dried red (e.g., chipotle), fresh green (e.g., jalapeño)
chives
cilantro
cinnamon
coriander
corn
cream
curry leaf
dill

EGGPLANT
fish
French cuisine, esp. Provençal
GARLIC
Italian cuisine
lemon: juice, zest
lemon balm
lemon thyme
marjoram
meats
mint
mustard seeds, esp. black
OIL: pecan, vegetable, walnut
OLIVE OIL
olives, esp. black, niçoise
ONIONS, esp. Spanish, white
oregano
PARSLEY, FLAT-LEAF
pasta
pecans
PEPPER: BLACK, WHITE
Pernod
pesto
pine nuts
red pepper flakes
rice or risotto
rosemary
saffron
sage
salmon
SALT: KOSHER, SEA
sausage, esp. chorizo
scallions
scallops
sesame seeds
shallots
shrimp
My wife was the inspiration for my zucchini dish. She makes a fantastic zucchini soup. She peels the zucchini and boils them in water, then purees them with a little of the water and adds a white cheese like goat or Philadelphia [cream cheese], then some olive oil and salt. It is amazing! It is creamy, velvety, and refined. We cook the zucchini and use the cooking water to make a gelatin. Then we take the white zucchini meat and make a mousse with olive oil. So the bottom of the dish is the mousse, then a layer of seeds — cleaned one by one, which is very labor intensive — then a layer of gelatin that is topped with Spanish caviar. The dish is sweet and savory, and we are proud of its simplicity [of taste].

— JOSE ANDRES, CAFE ATLANTICO (WASHINGTON, DC)

Dishes
Zucchini-Olive Oil Cake with Lemon Crunch Glaze
— Gina DePalma, pastry chef, Babbo (New York City)

Flavor Affinities
zucchini + basil + garlic
zucchini + cream + Parmesan cheese
zucchini + eggplant + garlic + onions + tomatoes
zucchini + pecorino cheese + pecan oil + pecans
zucchini + Pernod + walnut oil