

FLAVOR COMBINATIONS WE LOVE

A flavor combination is a dance that, if performed elegantly, guarantees to tickle, even deeply gratify, our palate! We are all familiar with the flawless marriage between bacon and eggs, strawberries and cream, chicken and mushrooms, white truffles and pasta...But what about unexpected flavor combinations?

HERE ARE JUST A FEW OF OUR FAVORITES:

- Caviar and Cauliflower
- Globe Artichoke and Crabmeat
- Morello Cherry Compote and Smoked Sea Trout
- Beef with Blackberries
- Strawberries and Balsamic Vinegar
- Mushroom and Chestnuts
- Truffle and Foie Gras
- Pumpkin and Gorgonzola
- Pistachios and Rose
- Coriander Seeds and Blueberry in Baked Goods



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SALT

Don't be afraid of salt! Salting isn't something to do once and then check off your list. Taste your dish as it cooks and don't stop seasoning until it reaches that magical zing!

WHEN TO SALT YOUR FOODS INSPIRED BY SAMIN NOSRAT'S SALTING CALENDAR:

2 DAYS IN ADVANCE
Thanksgiving turkey, Christmas goose or any other big bird, rib roast, leg of lamb
1 DAY IN ADVANCE
Chicken, thick steaks, quail, duck
TODAY
Anything you were supposed to salt earlier but didn't because you didn't have this info!
15 MINUTES BEFORE COOKING
Eggplant and zucchini (then pat dry), cabbage for slaw, thick tuna, swordfish steaks
JUST BEFORE COOKING
Flaky fish and delicate shellfish, vegetables for roasting/grilling, water for boiling, scrambled eggs
WHILE COOKING
Mushrooms, vegetables you're cooking on the stove, simmering sauces
5 MINUTES BEFORE SERVING
Tomatoes for salad
JUST BEFORE SERVING
Salad

LET'S TALK FLAVOR



avital:

FLAVOR 101

Ever wonder why restaurant dishes taste so delicious? Great chefs conceptualize their dishes, determining how each ingredient will balance, enhance, and interact with one-another. Building complex yet cohesive dishes is an ongoing pursuit, but understanding flavor can turn your dishes from 'meh' to 'hot dang!'

Use this guide as a starting point to build amazing dishes, beginning with these five basic flavors:

1. Sweet
2. Sour
3. Bitter
4. Salty
5. Umami

WHEN CREATING A DISH, IT IS HELPFUL TO THINK OF THESE FIVE FLAVORS AS DANCERS IN A ROUTINE

They'll balance and enhance each other. Learning how to layer them will turn you into a graceful flavor choreographer!

SWEET

Balances sour and bitter. A Thai curry is the perfect example. Sweet coconut is balanced by the sourness of lime. Is your tomato sauce too sour? Try adding a bit of sugar! Making a salad with bitter greens? Try mixing in some sweet fruits, like strawberries or pears, or some roasted sweet potatoes.

SOUR

Balances sweet and bitter. Think of key lime pie, where tart is so gracefully layered with sweetness. Are you sautéing some bitter greens? Try adding a dash of vinegar or lemon juice! The tanginess will mellow out the bitterness.

Sour also enhances salty! Like a carnitas taco with fresh squeezed lime! And wine in risotto is essential to enhance the flavor.

BITTER

Although you rarely add bitter to dishes, there are lots of ingredients that are naturally bitter, namely our green vegetables! Charred foods can also taste very bitter. Remember that sweet, sour, and salty can balance bitter. Think lemon juice on kale, BBQ sauce on charred meat, and bacon on brussel sprouts!

SALTY

Salt, in its many forms, provides a satisfying zing to dishes, by intensifying and deepening flavors. In particular, salty enhances sweet and vice versa. Think of the jolliness of salted caramel! Or of the beauty of sea salt chocolate chip cookies! Or savory prosciutto served with slices of chilled cantaloupe. Salty also balances bitterness. Think, for example, of a nice pasta with broccoli and a hint of anchovy.

UMAMI

Closely related to salty. Umami means 'yummy' in Japanese and was added to the list in 2002. It's that magical flavor that gives your palate a deep feeling of satisfaction and will always allow you to bring to life even the most under-seasoned of recipes. It can be added to dishes, marinades, and stocks even after they're done cooking. Your risotto is bland? Try adding more parmesan cheese. Your stock is uninspired? Try adding some soy sauce or miso!

