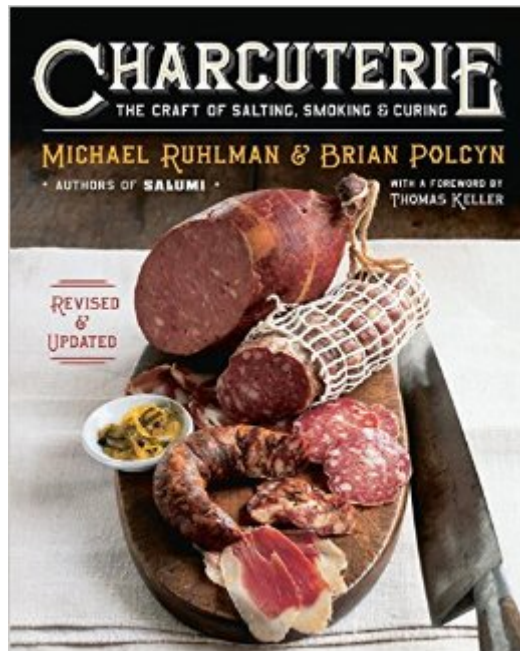


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Charcuterie: The Craft Of Salting, Smoking, And Curing (Revised And Updated)



Synopsis

An essential update of the perennial bestseller. Charcuterie exploded onto the scene in 2005 and encouraged an army of home cooks and professional chefs to start curing their own foods. This love song to animal fat and salt has blossomed into a bona fide culinary movement, throughout America and beyond, of curing meats and making sausage, pâtés, and confits. Charcuterie: Revised and Updated will remain the ultimate and authoritative guide to that movement, spreading the revival of this ancient culinary craft. Early in his career, food writer Michael Ruhlman had his first taste of duck confit. The experience became a fascination that transformed into a quest to understand the larger world of food preservation, called charcuterie, once a critical factor in human survival. He wondered why its methods and preparations, which used to keep communities alive and allowed for long-distance exploration, had been almost forgotten. Along the way he met Brian Polcyn, who had been surrounded with traditional and modern charcuterie since childhood. "My Polish grandma made kielbasa every Christmas and Easter," he told Ruhlman. At the time, Polcyn was teaching butchery at Schoolcraft College outside Detroit. Ruhlman and Polcyn teamed up to share their passion for cured meats with a wider audience. The rest is culinary history. Charcuterie: Revised and Updated is organized into chapters on key practices: salt-cured meats like pancetta, dry-cured meats like salami and chorizo, forcemeats including pâtés and terrines, and smoked meats and fish. Readers will find all the classic recipes: duck confit, sausages, prosciutto, bacon, pâté de campagne, and knackwurst, among others. Ruhlman and Polcyn also expand on traditional mainstays, offering recipes for hot- and cold-smoked salmon; shrimp, lobster, and leek sausage; and grilled vegetable terrine. All these techniques make for a stunning addition to a contemporary menu. Thoroughly instructive and fully illustrated, this updated edition includes seventy-five detailed line drawings that guide the reader through all the techniques. With new recipes and revised sections to reflect the best equipment available today, Charcuterie: Revised and Updated remains the undisputed authority on charcuterie. 50 line drawings

Book Information

Hardcover: 320 pages

Publisher: W. W. Norton & Company; Revised and Updated edition (September 3, 2013)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0393240053

ISBN-13: 978-0393240054

Product Dimensions: 8.4 x 1.3 x 10.3 inches

Shipping Weight: 2 pounds (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.6 out of 5 stars Â Â See all reviews Â (311 customer reviews)

Best Sellers Rank: #5,760 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #7 in Â Books > Cookbooks, Food & Wine > Cooking by Ingredient > Meat & Game > Meats #8 in Â Books > Cookbooks, Food & Wine > Canning & Preserving #90 in Â Books > Cookbooks, Food & Wine > Cooking Methods

Customer Reviews

If you want a beautifully written, lyrical account of one man's journey into sodium nitrite, this book is for you. If you want clear, consistent instructions that you can actually use to cure meat, this book is seriously deficient. I've cured and smoked bacon twice in the past couple of months. The first time, I followed a recipe that I found by Googling and it came out great. Everywhere I looked, though, I saw references to this book, and how great it is, and I figured I should probably break down and spend the money to get "real" instructions for bacon -- along with everything else contained herein. Ruhlman makes a point of providing weights (in grams) for everything, which is great. Hey, precision! So, I got out my scale and mixed up his basic dry cure. I read the instructions that say how much dry cure per how much pork belly, then weighed my two pieces of belly and measured out, to the gram, exactly how much cure I needed for each piece. I applied the cure, put the meat into bags, and put it in the refrigerator to let the salts, kosher and pink, do their thing. The first time I cured bacon, the belly produced a lot of liquid. This time, not so much -- even after a few days. Even though I was aware that every piece of meat is different, and what was happening could be totally normal, I started to worry that I had messed something up. I went back to the recipe, read it carefully, and realized the extent to which Michael Ruhlman is all over the place. It's almost as if he's engaging in providing inconsistent curing instructions as performance art, and fancies himself Marina Abramovic. The first thing that I noticed is that he gives two recipes for dry cure.

I purchased this book to learn more about preserving meat. I am sorely disappointed in its content. More disappointed with the reviews that claim this to be an excellent exhaustive instructional manual. To the Authors' credit they do not make any such claim. However, I discovered the book is not about preserving meat or vegetables, but about using old and sometimes ancient food preservation techniques to flavor food. The authors are chefs in fancy expensive restaurants. The recipes are written for the home cook, yet have far more information on the manufacture of expensive emulsified cured meat products (terrine, pate) than what us lower class poor Americans eat (bologna, hot dogs). Having said that the book is easy to read and the recipes are easy to follow.

The writers did an excellent job of breaking down the recipes from chef-speak or industrial recipes to the normal kitchen. Some of the chef-speak and professional kitchen terminology did make it into the book. A good kitchen scale that reads in grams is essential. I found a few of the recipes questionable. For example, a dry cured aged ham that has no nitrite to cure or preserve it, too dangerous for me to consider. Really!?! A whole ham to cure at room temperature for months without protection from botulism? Salt percentages ranged from 2%-16% with no explanation why. Curing salt percentages ranged above and below USDA required values (for commercial producers of preserved foods) with no explanation. What leads me to the conclusion that this is a book to be renamed "Flavoring Using Charcuterie Techniques" rather than its present title is that only a few recipes are indicated to store outside the refrigerator even after the food is technically preserved.

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