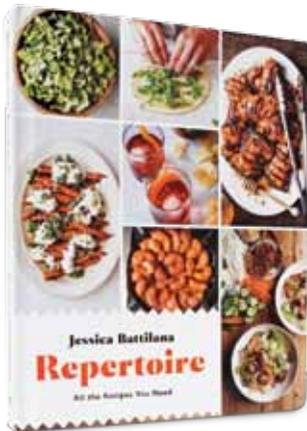




The Reading List

Abundant daylight. Ripe produce. Summer Fridays. What better way to honor this season than by upping the ante in the kitchen? These three new books will help you do just that.

BY KIMBERLY Y. MASIBAY



Repertoire

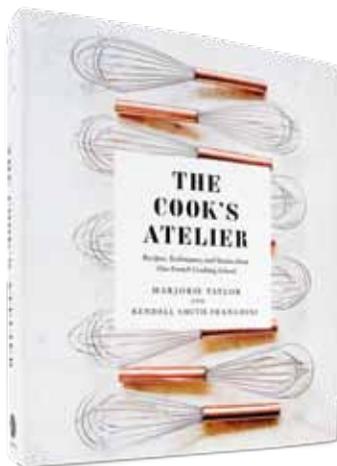
All the Recipes You Need
By Jessica Battilana (Little, Brown and Company; \$15.99)

This friendly little book by Jessica Battilana, who has collaborated on a half-dozen cookbooks and writes the Repertoire column for the *San Francisco Chronicle*, arrives just in

time for your summer cooking frenzy. Since I got my hands on a review copy, it has been in near-constant use. It's just that sort book: Smart. Gracious. Never show-offy. Ever useful. Battilana offers a very different picture of the good life than Taylor and Franchini's Burgundian dream (see below), but it's no less brilliant and perhaps more relatable. The author shares her repertoire: a collection of 75 recipes that comprise the backbone of her cooking life. She also offers handy tips gleaned from experience and fellow chefs, stories from her life, and charming anecdotes about daily meals with two young kids. Tried and true, the recipes (to name a few: Negronis and Potato Chips, The Greenest Green Salad, Garlic Butter Roast Chicken, and Strawberry Sundae) will satisfy, delight, and nourish

all who gather at your table. The author promises that these "are real recipes from real life, and they really work." And that's the truth. Battilana's recipes reward more than they demand, while also inspiring confidence and inviting adaptation. In her repertoire of a few dozen oft-prepared recipes, Battilana has found the distinctive confidence and freedom that cooking something frequently gives, and that culinary liberation is what she most wants to share with you.

Just try it! Candy Pork. The author's kids have dubbed this recipe Candy Pork, but there's nothing treacly about the complex flavors of this fork-tender meat braised in a Vietnamese-style sauce made of fish sauce, palm sugar, Thai chiles, ginger, garlic, shallots, and coconut water.



The Cook's Atelier

Recipes, Techniques, and Stories from Our French Cooking School
By Marjorie Taylor and Kendall Smith Franchini (Abrams; \$45)

Marjorie Taylor and Kendall Smith Franchini long dreamed of living in France. But unlike many of us who share the fantasy, these two have actually made the leap. Through loads of research and hard work, plus a soupçon of good fortune, the mother-daughter duo have realized their expat aspirations. Now they reside in the heart of Burgundy's wine region—along with Kendall's husband (aka "the Frenchman") and the couple's little ones—surrounded by idyllic farmland and endless vineyards. There, in the

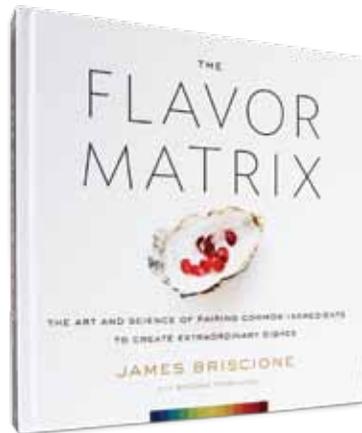
walled medieval city of Beaune, Taylor and Franchini have cofounded an almost impossibly pretty cookware boutique and culinary school called The Cook's Atelier. Their transporting debut book goes by the same name, and poring through its pages is almost like stepping into their food-centered world with its aroma of baking madeleines, clanking copper pots and pans, chop-chop-chopping carbon-steel chef's knives, and hissing vintage Italian espresso machine. Until you're able to visit the actual atelier in person, the book version is surely the next best thing. A welcoming 400-page beauty filled with evocative photographs and approachable recipes, it's a volume you'll

Continued >>

revisit time and again: To read of the authors' adventures. To meet the local farmers, butchers, bakers, cheesemakers, gardeners, fishmongers, and winemakers. To savor the 16 seasonal menus. To master basic French techniques, such as blanching, sauce-making, frenching, and tying roasts. To perfect classic recipes, like coq au vin, brioche, and soufflés. And, of course, to simply revel in

joie de vivre. Grounded in tradition yet modern in sensibility, *The Cook's Atelier* is a comprehensive guide to cooking, eating, and living the French way. *Bon appétit!*

Summer in a ramekin: Lemon Soufflés. Light, airy, and citrusy, these classic soufflés epitomize la cuisine Française.



The Flavor Matrix

The Art and Science of Pairing Common Ingredients to Create Extraordinary Dishes

By James Briscione with Brooke Parkhurst (Houghton Mifflin Harcourt; \$30)

Nothing is as profoundly liberating as knowing how to cook confidently without a recipe. If ever a book could get you there, this is the one. It could be argued that this is an advanced book. And, indeed, expert cooks will find much to geek out over in these pages. But I also think this book—chock full of culinary whats, hows, and whys—is the ultimate primer for the novice. In *The Flavor Matrix*, author James Briscione, an instructor at the Institute for Culinary Education in New York City and a two-time *Chopped* champion, dives deep into the art and science of flavor pairing, exploring the hidden connections between ingredients. He presents 150 of the most commonly used ingredients from A (Allium, Artichoke, Asparagus, Avocado) through V (Vanilla). For each, he pinpoints and quantifies their aromatic compounds and consolidates all of his findings into an infographic that

he calls a “flavor matrix.” There is one matrix for every ingredient or ingredient group (e.g., Allium, Brassica, Crustacean, Stone Fruit) that Briscione studied, plus a simple recipe that demonstrates how to put complementary ingredients together. If you’re curious about food-science research—molecular structures, volatile and aromatic compounds, and the like—you’ll enjoy peeking under the microscope, so to speak. There, you’ll discover the chemistry responsible for the flavors and aromas of your favorite ingredients and learn the scientific reasons why foods that we intuitively put together (e.g., prosciutto and melon) get along so well. More important, you’ll learn how to put this knowledge to good use in your kitchen. Flavor-pairing theory posits that if two ingredients share significant numbers of aromatic compounds, they’ll taste wonderful together. So we can turn to the flavor matrix for any ingredient in this book, find a few compatible partners, and whip up something delicious. Perhaps something expected (Cocoa and Chile-Rubbed Beef). Or unexpected (Corn and Coconut Crème Brûlée), surprising (Chicken and Mushroom Burgers with Strawberry “Ketchup”) or downright mind-boggling (Spicy Fish Sauce Peanut Brittle). That a single book makes this sort of innovation accessible to any cook from beginner to pro is certainly something to celebrate. So let’s eat!

Puckery perfection: Cucumber, Berry, and Pistachio Salad with Tamarind Vinaigrette. As every pickle lover knows, cucumbers love sour flavors, making tamarind an ideal, unexpected addition to this summery salad.