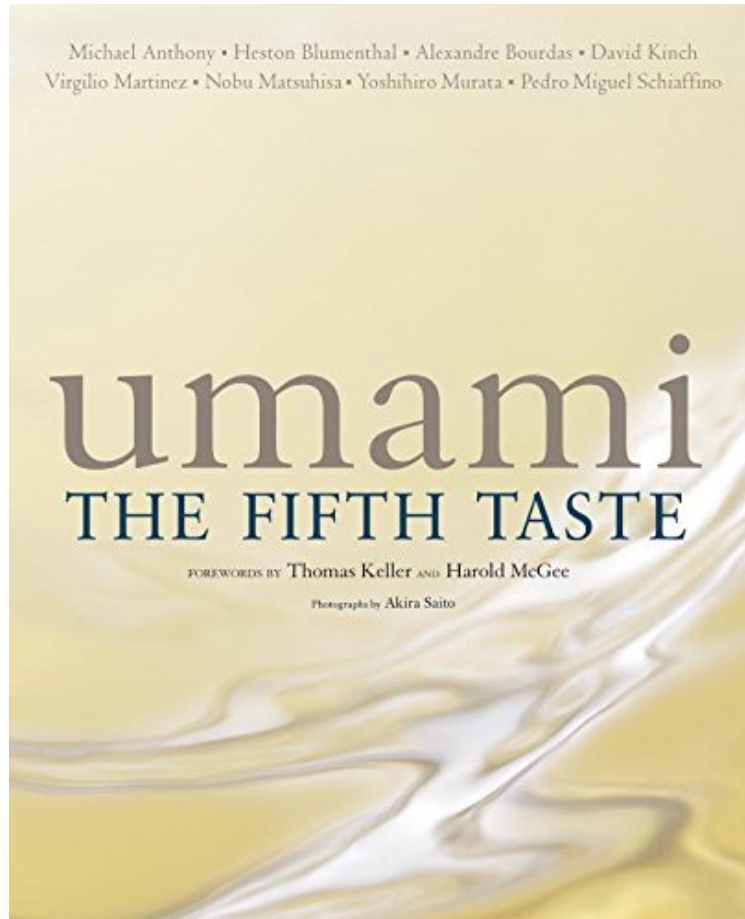


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## Umami: The Fifth Taste

*Michael Anthony, Heston Blumenthal, Alexandre Bourdas, David Kinch, Virgilio Martinez*  
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**Michael Anthony, Heston Blumenthal, Alexandre Bourdas, David Kinch, Virgilio Martinez : Umami: The Fifth Taste** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Umami: The Fifth Taste:

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Umami is described as a pleasant savory taste imparted by glutamate, a type of amino acid which occurs naturally in many foods including meat, fish, vegetables, and dairy products. As the taste of umami itself is subtle and blends well with other tastes to expand and round out flavors, most people don't recognize umami when they encounter it, but it

plays an important role in making food taste delicious. Umami is considered the fifth taste, in addition to sweet, sour, salty, and bitter. In *Umami*, ten of today's most renowned chefs explain how they discovered this fifth taste and the ways in which it has had an impact on their cooking. Two of the chefs are Japanese (Nobu and Murata), but the others come from around the world: the U.S. (Anthony and Kinch), the U.K. (Blumenthal and Cursan), France (Bourdais and Nagae), and Peru (Martinez and Schiaffino). Despite their diverse backgrounds and locations, however, they all have in common an understanding and appreciation of umami, and the unique ways in which they're able to use it to maximize the exquisite flavors of their culinary creations. For each of the eight main contributors, there's a two-page color spread featuring a personal essay about umami, and photos of the chef and his restaurant. Then the chef presents four recipes that showcase the fabulous umami-rich dishes that have earned his establishment its Michelin star(s). The recipes incorporate fresh, local ingredients and use no butter or oil, so they are healthy as well as sublimely delicious. An additional section of the book showcases pastry, as two of today's leading pastry chefs weigh in on how umami plays a role in their baking. Recipes for both savory and sweet treats are included. The book also includes information about the history and science of umami, written by two leading experts on the subject, John Prescott, Ph.D. of Taste Matters Research and Consulting, and Ole Mouritsen, Ph.D., of the University of Southern Denmark and author of *Seaweeds and Sushi: Food for the Eye, the Body, and the Soul*. The gorgeous photos throughout are by Akira Saito, the photographer for *Edomae Sushi*, published by Kodansha in 2010.

**About the Author** Michael Anthony is the executive chef-partner of Gramercy Tavern in New York City, and received the James Beard Award for Best Chef: NYC. He has cooked in Japan, in some of the finest French restaurants (Jacques Cagna, Michel Guérard, L'Arpege, L'Astrance), and at Daniel in New York. His book, *The Gramercy Tavern Cookbook*, was published in October 2013. HESTON BLUMENTHAL's *The Fat Duck*, in Berkshire, UK, was awarded three Michelin stars in 2004, and was twice voted "The Best Restaurant in the World" by an international panel of 500 experts. In 2006, Blumenthal was awarded an OBE. He is the author of a number of cookbooks, most recently, *Historic Heston*, the James Beard Foundation's "Cookbook of the Year" for 2014. Alexandre Bourdais was the chef de cuisine and director of Michel Bras's Michelin 3-star restaurant in Japan. He then opened the renowned Sa. Qu. Na in Normandy, France. David Kinch, a champion of contemporary California cuisine, has won the Best Chef in America award for the Pacific region from the James Beard Foundation. His restaurant, Manresa in Los Gatos, California, has been awarded two Michelin stars for five consecutive years. Kinch's cookbook, *Manresa*, came out last year. Virgilio Martinez is the chef-owner of Central in Lima, Peru and is known for applying modern cooking techniques to indigenous Peruvian ingredients. Nobu Matsuhisa was born in Japan and classically trained in a sushi restaurant in Tokyo before he headed to Peru. In 1987, he opened Matsuhisa in Los Angeles, followed by Nobu New York City seven years later. Since then, he has launched 29 more restaurants around the world. Kodansha published two previous books with Nobu: his first cookbook in 2001 and *Nobu Miami: The Party Cookbook* in 2008. Yoshiro Murata is the third generation owner-chef of the famed Kikunoi restaurant in Kyoto and the author of *Kaiseki* and *Japanese Home Cooking with Master Chef Murata*, both published by Kodansha. Chef Murata is the chairman of The Japanese Culinary Academy and plays an integral role in the Japanese food industry. He was instrumental in the campaign to add traditional Japanese cuisine to UNESCO's list of Intangible Cultural Heritage Assets. Pedro Miguel Schiaffino is the chef-proprietor of Malabar in Lima, Peru. Known as the "jungle chef," he has worked to highlight the foods of the jungle and Peruvian cuisine.